

# GENESIS ACCEPTED



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# The Way of Cain

It was earlier this year and I was preparing to preach. I was reading in Jude and as I did so hit verse 11. It was not to be the subject of that sermon so I noted it for future reference. Preachers often do this. It's how they keep the flow of sermons and ideas going.

What does Jude 11 say? *'Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion.'* I'm not interested in Balaam or Korah for the purposes of *Genesis Accepted*, but only in Cain. I asked myself, "What was 'the way of Cain'?" Why would Jude be warning us to avoid his errors?

## Murder is always seen as being wrong

Cain is most famous for being a murderer. We all *know* that murder is wrong, and that we must not do it. Even the people of the world, who don't care at all about God and what He said, acknowledge that murder is wrong. They often reference something called 'Natural Law' as their authority for this notion. They usually don't put too much else into the pigeon-hole of things they feel are against all Natural Law - just rape, paedophilia, theft and possibly adultery, but the notion of accepting that murder is against all Natural Law is never questioned. It's probably number one on everybody's list of wrongs.

## The Way of Cain was not murder

Jude was warning his fellow Christians to avoid people who walked in the way of Cain. It would have been extremely funny to think that they were having fellowship with active murderers and couldn't see that there was a problem there. I mean, would we feel safe and be prepared to break bread with unrepentant murderers? Of course not, and neither would they, so whatever 'the way of Cain' was, it was not murder which Jude had in mind.

## Insight from the New Testament

Cain, as we all know, is the star of Genesis chapter 4 and he is not mentioned anywhere else in the Old Testament. He gets three mentions in the New and it is the New which opens up his character more to us. We are indebted to the New Testament for insights into Melchizedek, and his priesthood (Heb. 6-8), as well as Enoch, and his translation (Heb. 11:5-6). So what does the New tell us about Cain that we can't learn from studying the Old in Genesis chapter 4?

The first quotation comes from Hebrews 11:4: *'By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And*

*through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.'* Here it is really Abel who is the subject of the verse and he is commended for offering, by faith, a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain did. Hebrews is concentrating on Cain's wrong sacrifice, which was condemned before he killed Abel, not the murder. The Genesis story confirms that this was the focus of the problem between the two brothers. So part of the meaning behind Jude's use of 'the way of Cain' has to do, not specifically with sacrificing, because Christians don't need to do this any more, thanks to Christ's work on the Cross, but to do with attitudes to authority and doing things to honour God in the way in which God has asked us to and not to suit ourselves. This is an important point about how we worship God. When He has told us what to do, we will be blessed if we do as we are told, by faith, and we will probably not be blessed if we make things up to suit ourselves.

## Commanded to love

The second quotation comes from John's first epistle, chapter 3. Let's back up and catch the context a little, starting at verse 7: *'Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.'* (1 John 3:7-12). The contrast here is of those who practise righteousness and those who deliberately make a practice of sinning, and of those who have no love for their brethren. We are not *asked* to love our brethren; we are *commanded* to do so. Love is not an optional extra for some, or even most, Christians. It is a command for ALL Christians.

## The spirit of antichrist

Jude was thinking about these aspects of Cain when he used him as an example to avoid. There were men who had deliberately infiltrated the Christian ranks for their own personal gain. Some went around claiming to be apostles. Some went around and lived off the good nature of brethren, purporting to be preachers of the

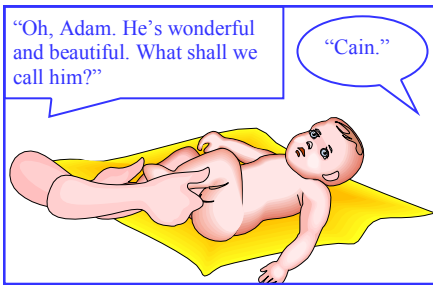
Gospel when, in fact, they were spongers who were only looking after themselves. Many must have been very plausible people who were able to deceive sincere believers. They sometimes came with different gospels and John, and Paul, of course, warned the brethren about them. They had to test the spirits, as John puts it, to see who is genuine. *'Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.'* (1 John 4:1-4). It was the spirit of antichrist which Jude was writing about and this he linked to Cain and his attitude to the things of God. This was a real problem for the first Christians. They had no New Testament to refer to, such as we have, so were more vulnerable to false teaching. But why would these people do this? What motivated them to be like Cain and walk in his way?

## No pleasure in the death of the wicked

Just before New Year (30th December 2006) a man was hanged very publicly. Some people are now saying it was wrong to do this (though see article in *GA Number 9* on 'Capital Punishment') and one pithy letter in the *Daily Mail* of Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 07, made a play on words from Ezekiel, either in Ezekiel 18:23 or 33:11, where the same sentiment is expressed: *'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked...'* These words were quoted to make us all think that God is against judicial execution even of the wicked. But what does Ezekiel actually say? I'll give you a more complete quotation so you can see for yourself: *'As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live...'* Now that's a little different from the impression given by the first quote. God is talking about the spiritual death of the unrighteous, wishing that they would repent and start living righteously, and has nothing at all to do with the just execution of a criminal. Nevertheless God is no doubt very sad indeed when a man like Saddam Hussein is executed, no matter what he has done, because his soul is eternally condemned, and God has no wish 'that any should perish but that all should reach repentance' (2 Peter 3:9).

## All murderers were once innocent babies

Such an event always makes me sad. I go back in my mind to our first parents and try to imagine their feelings at the beginning of Genesis 4. *'Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD.'* (Gen 4:1). That's all. But imagine Eve holding her first baby for the first time, the first baby ever born in the whole world.



She would look at him and marvel, just like every mother has done ever since. Here was a little bundle of humanity with all the potential in the world. She would have cuddled him, caressed him, fed and loved him, and no doubt she would have hoped all sorts of things, and dreamed all sorts of dreams, for him. And he turned out to be Cain, a murderer, an apostate, a rebel who would not do as God wanted him to. Saddam's mother would have felt the same; so would Hitler's mother, and Stalin's mother, and... you name them. When those babies were born they were perfect and sinless and beautiful. When I looked at Saddam Hussein standing there with the noose around his neck, I think what might have been, and if I think that and am sad, not by the justice of the event but by the waste of a life, I wonder how God must feel too.

#### What was Cain's problem?

What happened to Cain? What did he do that was wrong since after all we get very little idea of it in Genesis? He offered the fruit of his labours to God instead of a lamb. It doesn't seem like a massive problem and God said it could easily be put right. Well let's go back to Eden, no, let's go beyond Eden to the heavenly realm and see what happened to Satan. Isaiah 14 tells us what happened to him:

*'How you are fallen from heaven,  
O Day Star, son of Dawn!  
How you are cut down to the ground,  
you who laid the nations low!  
You said in your heart,  
'I will ascend to heaven;  
above the stars of God  
I will set my throne on high;  
I will sit on the mount of assembly  
in the far reaches of the north;  
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;  
I will make myself like the Most High.'* (Is. 14:12-14).

This picture of the king of Babylon is couched in terms which have to refer indirectly to Satan himself. It shows us that, in his arrogance, he wanted to be like God. He did not want to bow to God's authority. He thought he was so important. He thought, 'I will make myself like the Most High'. In other words, 'I will be my own authority. I will decide what I want. I'll do what I want and not what God wants.' He was full of self, and full of pride.

Then down in Eden he came and tempted Eve, and Adam, who was with her: "'God

knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**", (Gen 3:5-6) 'You will be like God'. That was what he tempted them with. You will be the arbiter of good and evil. You will be your own master. You will not be under anybody's authority but your own. He tempted them with pride, and the importance of the self.

They fell for it, just like Satan had fallen for it, just like Cain fell for it and just like all who reject authority, God's authority, down the years have fallen for it. In Jude's day these apostates who were trying to lead the faithful astray wanted to be the reference points for the faith, not God and His apostles. They preached false truths, which were lies, of course.

#### Pride: the truly original sin

Cain came to sacrifice to God but he rejected the God-instructed, God-given way, which Abel acknowledged and followed. Cain decided that he would bring what he wanted to bring: the fruits of his labours, that should be good enough for God. But it wasn't. When God slew an animal to provide skins to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve, He showed then that blood had to be shed to cover sin. It was to be His way of dealing with sin, which was why Jesus had to shed His blood as the final sacrifice. There is no necessary logic in this beyond the fact that God said that this was how it must be done. He makes the rules and He gives the terms of reference. We have to accept this by faith. And in Hebrews we read that it was, *'By faith [that] Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.'* (Heb. 11:4-5). How does Abel speak? In Ephesians we read: *'For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.'* (Eph 2:8-9). The way of Cain was the way of human pride, salvation by works, his own works, but the way of Abel was by faith doing as God told him to. It was God who ruled in Abel's life. It was Cain who ruled in Cain's life. This is rebellion. God warned him to straighten up and he would be accepted but Cain got angry that Abel's way brought blessings, but his own, which no doubt he thought was superior, did not.

#### A real example

Let me finish by telling you about my aunty Olive. She was mum's sister. Mum was one of five girls and one boy. The boy, John, was the youngest. Olive was number four and is dead. Numbers two (mum), and three (Nora) are still alive. All of the girls were baptized, but, sadly, John never was. Olive, however, married a good man by

the world's standards, but he wasn't a Christian. He was not opposed to religion; he just didn't bother with it. He was too busy making his way up in the world and he did very well at it indeed. Olive, who was always a rebel, fell into his ways and ultimately fell away from the church and from whatever she ever had had in terms of faith.

One day we were talking about religion and she said to me, "Graham, it's not what you believe which matters, it's how you live." I'll not spend too much time dissecting the stupidity of that statement because what you believe governs how you live. She went on to tell me that she had lived her life as a good person and would have no problems in the next. That's a summary of what she said, of course. Essentially she was trying to tell me that the way to heaven was by good works and that this was all that mattered. I tried to point out that that was not what the Bible said but she cut me off, not wanting a teenage nephew putting her right about spiritual things.

She was not a murderer like Cain. As far as the people of the world were concerned, she was a fine lady. She was Chairwoman of the W.I. (Women's Institute) and was well-known in the life of the village where they settled. Lots attended her funeral and the vicar said nice things about her. But she wanted grace by works and not by faith. She did not want the blood of Christ covering her sins for she knew that God would be impressed by the offerings of works, her works, which she would bring to His altar. She rebelled against the church. She never bothered with serving Christ. Like Cain she was brought up by godly parents who taught her well. But she wanted to live as she wanted to live and be a free spirit, so, in pride, she rebelled. The world didn't think she was wicked at all but she walked in the way of Cain. I don't expect to see my aunty Olive in heaven.

The way of Cain is about pride and love of self rather than love of God and the brethren. It's the 'Me' generation where 'if it's right for me, it's okay.' It's about misplaced attitudes and values. I want to be the boss, in control of my life myself instead of surrendering to God and His will. It doesn't accept the authority of the Bible or the apostles. It's as old as the Earth itself and it's very easy to adopt it, especially in our generation, where most people out there neither want to know nor even care. It is a trap which is difficult not to fall into, and this is why both Jude and Peter spend a good deal of time railing against it by way of warning. Like all faithful men and women down the ages, they want to encourage Christians to spot the dangers, be alert, and avoid the traps which Satan sets. Let us ensure that we, at least, spot them and don't walk in 'the way of Cain'.

# Longevity and Giantism

If you were to meet me and later somebody asked you describe me, nobody would dream of calling me average height, nor probably *very* old. My children, even with their filial loyalty stretched to breaking point, would never call me tall, and they have called me old for donkey's years so their views on that don't count! At 65, though I now draw the Old Aged Pension, I'm not 'old' by today's standards. However, if I could be transported back to, say, Henry VIII's time, I would definitely be classed as old and of average height. Henry was considered reasonably tall, though he was only slightly taller than me, and dying at 55 was on the oldish side for his day, though many, of course, did live to be older even in Tudor times. (For those who do know me, I am actually referring to my true height of 5'6½", which I would be if I could unroll my back and stand fully upright again.)

## People were smaller in the past

Go into any genuine Tudor mansion or house and most men today would have to duck to get through the inside doors. Look at carved effigies of Tudor worthies in churches and see how easy it is to assume that they are not life-sized because they look so small but most probably they are full-sized. Tudor men were not big. In Speke Hall, Liverpool - a genuine Tudor mansion - there is a wooden life-sized carving of a lady of average size in full dress. She is only 4'10". People today are much taller, and live considerably longer on average, and this trend has been going on for quite some time. Even in our day children still seem to be averaging significantly taller than their parents and can expect to live longer. Why?

Well, it's partly due to diet and medical care from cradle to grave, but that's not the

most important factor. Since Tudor times, and especially after the Industrial Revolution, we have been burning more and more fossil fuels and forests thereby putting more CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide) into the atmosphere. The carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere is a key factor in aging and maturation.

## The Ages problem

One of the puzzles and problems for believers in taking Genesis as literally true when dealing with the early Earth is the given ages of the patriarchs. Abraham is said to have '*died in a good old age, an old man and full of years*' (Gen. 25:8). He was 175. This was absolutely nothing when compared with some of the antediluvian patriarchs. Abraham would have been a mere lad to them! Their average age, when you take Enoch out of the statistics because he did not taste death, was 912.

These ages are a puzzle. They certainly stretch our credibility in the reliability of these accounts. We might simply feel that we have to accept them in faith, which would be fine for the committed believer, but this won't answer the sceptic, nor should it.

## The Multiplication Myth

The most popular way of handling this problem is to assume that they are exaggerations of eight, nine or ten-fold. This brings Methuselah, the oldest man, down to nearly 97 when he died, which seems to work quite well on a ten-fold system. Even at an exaggeration of eight times, he would only have been 121, and I think most of us could accommodate that figure. On that scale Abraham would have died 'old and full of years' at 17½, or just under 22 on an

eight-fold scheme. But if we drop the ages at death by 8, 9 or 10 we must also drop the ages at which they are said to have fathered children to the same degree. Once we do this the absurdities of this system soon kick in. Enoch would have become a dad at 6½ (or 8⅛) and most of the others too would defy the natural and normal ages to father children. Noah was the biggest exception at 50 (or 62½).

Other claims to solve the mystery fall by the wayside under examination too. To think they were lengths of dynasties might carry some weight save that the Bible sees those who are mentioned at a later date, e.g. Enoch in Jude 14, as individuals and not dynasties. And if Enoch was a dynasty in Genesis he would have to be a dynasty in Hebrews 11:5 with the whole dynasty being translated into heaven by faith! Also to suggest that the ages had something to do with their relative importance leaves us wondering why such a massively important man as Methuselah is not mentioned again in scripture, nor are we told why he was so important (see article on Methuselah in *Genesis Accepted* Number 3, where many of the things we are dealing with here were presented for the first time). No, we are stuck with the fact that these ages, on a simple reading of the text and a normal understanding of the words and context, are intended to be understood as literally true, and that solves absolutely nothing!

## Maturation rates and their effects

When we scan the ages of these men we note not only do they live longer but their maturation rates are very much slower. Their metabolism seems to have been on a different cycle than ours. The ages at which they became fathers are very high compared to ours. They range from 65 to 500 but if we eliminate the highest and the lowest and take an average it comes out to a startling 124. There is other evidence that they were virile and vigorous for far longer than we are today. Do you remember how worried Abraham was about Sarah on entering Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20), and also later when he encountered Abimelech (Gen. 20)? He thought both Pharaoh and Abimelech would look at Sarah, lust after her and desire to have her for themselves. Sarah was in her 80's when she encountered Abimelech and I doubt if even the most doting of husbands today would be worried on that score - except me, of course!

Shakespeare saw nothing incongruous in making Romeo and Juliet about 15 and 14 in his play. They matured at an earlier age in his day. Early maturation makes average heights a lot lower because bones attain their



Speke Hall - Liverpool (a genuine Tudor Mansion)

final size quicker and are completely ossified earlier, hence we see small Tudor people. Conversely, slower maturation rates would produce taller people and giantism. Not only people but also other forms of living things would show giantism. We would therefore expect giantism in the antediluvian and immediately post-diluvian world if maturation rates were slower. This does not mean that all antediluvian people and immediately post-diluvian people, and other forms of life, were giant-sized. It just means that the incidence of giantism would be well above the norm.

### Scriptural evidences

As we have noted in other articles in previous issues of *Genesis Accepted*, and earlier in this one too, ages and maturation were consistently high before the Flood and steadily dropped off until they levelled out somewhere around King David's time *circa* 1000BC. Ages averaged 912 pre-Flood but Shem only made it to 600, Abraham just got to 175, Moses to 120 but three-score-and-ten was the norm by David's time. What happened to bring this about?

The answer, of course, is the Flood. It not only destroyed the sinful world of Noah's day, it also altered the physical environment in which mankind now has to live out its existence. There are many facets to this, and the article on Methuselah in *Genesis Accepted* Number 3 goes into some of them. However, in this article, we want to focus principally on the ones which could affect longevity and giantism today. Essentially this is the atmosphere, for in its composition lies the clue to the problem. There is absolutely no doubt that if the antediluvian atmosphere had been the same as the one in which we live, people could not have lived as long as the Bible said they lived. If it were radically different, such things become very possible indeed.

### Three main lines of enquiry

There are three basic elements of the atmosphere which would affect longevity and giantism: i) the water vapour content, ii) the CO<sub>2</sub> content and iii) the ozone layer. Let's look briefly at them and see what we can learn.

#### i) Water vapour

The original Earth was not watered by rain from clouds. Genesis 2:6 tells us it was watered by a mist. Rain is first seen at the start of the Flood, and of course rainbows, appear after the Flood as a sign of God's promise to us until Christ returns. Temperatures in the antediluvian world were uniformly high all around the globe because the vapour canopy created a greenhouse effect. This was probably aided by there being little or no tilt on the axis and therefore no seasons as we know them today. Seasons were part of the post-diluvian covenantal promise (Gen. 8:22) and the promise of their regulari-

ty and reliability are as much a part of the Noachian Covenant as is the rainbow. With higher temperatures the oceans would be much warmer, calculated to be around 60°F (15°C) instead of today's rather chilly average of 38°F (3°C).

#### ii) Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) levels

All of this would produce several effects. There would be much more CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, up to 5000 ppm (parts per million) or 15x today's level of 330 ppm and even more than the 290 ppm of Tudor times. Warm oceans release CO<sub>2</sub> and the water vapour canopy would help hold it there. Thus there would be a warm, carbon dioxide-rich atmosphere which would encourage giantism and slower maturation rates. The nearest we get to this today is along the Californian coast where mists keep the atmosphere laden with vapour and the redwoods grow to enormous heights.



Giant redwoods in Sequoia National Park California (USA)

The much warmer oceans would affect the polar regions and we would expect to find evidence of lush vegetation and corals in high latitudes, where we see none today, and evidence of giantism in ancient flora and fauna. This is indeed exactly what we do find. The fossil record shows that the polar regions were once warm, though regular scientists simply claim that this is evidence that today's polar areas migrated there from warmer regions some time in the past. That could possibly be a correct explanation for the lush vegetation and the corals but does not explain the giantism of earlier times.

#### iii) The Ozone Layer

One of the reasons why regular scientists are worried about the depletion of the ozone layer is that it protects us from the harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun. If the ozone layer were to disappear suddenly, we would all be dead within two

hours. The thinner the layer the more dangerous to life, and the more ultraviolet which gets through the more the aging process gallops along and life-spans are reduced. The thicker the layer the greater the protection and there is less of a problem. One of the effects of the Flood was to reduce the thickness of the ozone layer and thus steadily to reduce mankind's life-spans.

### The effect of the Noachian Flood

The best model for dealing with these effects recorded in the geological record and the Bible, is that there really was a worldwide Flood. This reduced the ozone layer and altered the water vapour canopy by allowing much of the latter to condense and fall as rain - not all of the rain of the Flood came from this source but a significant amount did - and thereby reduced the CO<sub>2</sub> content; the axis was tilted, or tilted significantly more, and seasons as we now know them came in. Later came the Ice Age, from an astronomical source (we will be discussing this in greater detail in the next few issues of *Genesis Accepted*). This drastically reduced the temperature of the oceans and caused the CO<sub>2</sub> content to be reduced even more dramatically. Cold oceans apparently absorb carbon dioxide like blotting paper. It took about 1500 years for the atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> to reduce to the lows which we know today, during which time the lives of the patriarchs, though long by our standards, were steadily reducing, as were their maturation rates.

### CO<sub>2</sub> and Aging

So how does the level of CO<sub>2</sub> affect the aging process in human beings? Laboratory experiments apparently show that when vertebrate animals, like humans, live in a carbon dioxide enriched atmosphere their blood becomes more acidic. This gives superior zinc retention and other trace elements and would certainly reduce, if not eliminate, arthritis which is caused by alkaline blood.

However, a more important effect of enriched CO<sub>2</sub> is an expansion of the blood vessels in the brain and in the skin specifically, not in other tissues. With more CO<sub>2</sub> and dilated blood vessels, there would be more oxygen available to the brain cells. The greater oxygenation of brain cells results in better retention of cell electrosensitivity. In the mid-brain there is a gland called the hypothalamus and this orchestrates aging for the neuro-endocrine system. Loss of electrosensitivity of the cells in the hypothalamus results in the breakdown of the suppression system of the hypothalamus, which becomes active and results in the diseases of aging. What all this means is that when CO<sub>2</sub> is low, aging is increased rapidly and prematurely.<sup>1</sup>

If the pre-Flood atmosphere was CO<sub>2</sub> enriched to a level of 15x today, not an unreasonable figure, this would have greatly

increased longevity and slowed maturation times. In combination with the removal of the water vapour canopy and the depletion of the ozone layer, the ideal antediluvian atmosphere was destroyed so man's life-spans began to decline. The new atmospheric conditions also proved too difficult for great creatures like the dinosaurs to survive, since the advantage was to smaller creatures and indeed smaller flora as well.

### Conclusion

This somewhat technical presentation is made, not to blind you with science, nor to confuse, but rather it is made to show that scientists, working in the more technical side of the problems we face, are finding answers. Not that everything has been verified, or not falsified, and we can throw the results willy-nilly at our unbelieving friends to prove our case, but we can take heart that answers are appearing and becoming available. We need not fear facing up to the challenge of biblical longevity and especially the great ages of the patriarchs. They are not at all unreasonable. Once we recognize that the world before the Flood was a very very different world to the

one we know both in its landforms, atmosphere and climate, we can begin to grapple with the 'How?' of the problem.

There are plenty of clues in the Bible that these things are so. Those who puzzle about them and feel that their faith is put under great strain by Genesis chapter 5, for example, and those who mock the reliability of the scriptures, have one thing in common at this point: they have not studied the problem in any detail. Maybe they don't know where to look for answers, and that's not their fault. This is one reason why *Genesis Accepted* exists, to help out in these areas from time to time.

Once we do study it, we find that not all problems melt into nothingness but that there are solutions which suggest themselves and which do absolutely no violence to the tenets of modern science. You don't have to put your brain into neutral, or even into reverse, to believe in the accuracy and literal truth of the biblical record. In fact, the more you study in these fields the more you learn to trust and rely on the Bible.

These years are definitely 'years' as we know them and the account is absolutely consistent. The problem is that subconsciously we tend to judge from the present as the key to the past, which is the uniformitarian axiom and the point from which geologists judge everything. This is why the accounts do not stack up. If we can break free of this restriction, since there is absolutely no reason at all why the past should be like the present, we can begin to get our heads around some of these sorts of problems.

<sup>1</sup> The technical data for this article comes from an unpublished article by Donald W. Patten and Phillip A. Patten entitled, *The Longevity Accounts in Genesis, Job, Joseph and Augustine*, graciously sent to the author by them in 1980. It was the basis for a lengthy published article in the magazine *Catastrophism and Ancient History*, Volume II, Part I, August 1979, entitled, 'A Comprehensive Theory on Aging, Giantism and Longevity,' by Donald W. Patten and Phillip A. Patten.

Daily Mail, Tuesday, June 26, 2007

Above: The fearsome seven-inch beak and skull of an early species  
Right: More modest dimensions of a modern day penguin

### Giant Penguins

There is a great deal of well-documented evidence of giantism in past times. The best known giants, of course, are the reptiles, which we now call dinosaurs. There are fossils of dragonflies with 3' (1m) wing-spans, giant sloths and bears, huge trees and ferns - in fact giantism is known in almost every species and on every continent. The latest to be added to the list are the giant penguins. They were featured in the *Daily Mail* of Tuesday 26th June, 2007 so it seemed a good idea to use them as examples along with this article on giantism. Uniformitarian science places giant-sized creatures and plants way back in time, as evidenced by their according a date of 42-million years ago for some of these giant penguins, which would dwarf today's penguins completely. The coal forests of the so-called Carboniferous Age, conventionally dated as being approximately 350 million-years ago, are replete with huge tree fossils. We would date these fossils as being antediluvian when the Earth was uniformly warm and moist, and with a much higher CO<sub>2</sub> content in the atmosphere.

Penguin family tree: The *Perudyptes devriesi*, left, from 42million years ago, the much smaller Humboldt, living now - and both dwarfed by *Icadyptes salasi*



**The next issue, number 11, will be mainly about the Flood.**

# Interpreting the Fossil Record

Supporters of the Theory of Evolution might well say that all the problems Creationists outline with it are all very well but the fossil record shows creatures going from simple to complex as you go up the strata. Sedimentary rock is laid down as particles fall on to the sea bed and lake bottoms, and accumulate amazingly slowly in an upwards direction. The fossils at the bottom must be of creatures which were significantly older than those at the top. Geologists call this 'The Law of Superposition' and it helps them to grade rocks and fossils into approximate age order - though it can give no absolute dating of ages at all, of course.

### Circular Reasoning

Unfortunately for the geologists there is nowhere in the world, not even in the Grand Canyon, where there is an accumulation of all the strata of the Geological Column. The age order of the rocks given in the standard textbooks does not depend on the Law of Superposition but on the fossils found in them. Thus when a geologist studies the strata in an area and tries to work out a sequential explanation for them, he looks at the fossils to decide which rocks are older than which. He knows that gaps from the ideal column appear everywhere and that strata can sometimes be inverted with older rocks lying on top of younger ones - according to 'his' determination of their age.

One classic example of this comes from the Assynt District of North West Scotland, in Sutherland. Here the older rocks of the Moine series are said to have moved about 10 miles westwards overriding the younger rocks which now lie beneath them. The older ones are metamorphic gneiss (pronounced 'nice') and are supposedly 2,400,000,000 years old, dating from the Pre-Cambrian era, whereas the underlying rocks are of quartzite from the Cambrian period, dated as being

ERA	PERIOD	AGE m. years	BEGAN m.y. ago	EVOLUTIONARY FEATURES
<b>CENOZOIC</b>	Holocene			Man appears
	Pleistocene	1	1	Ice Ages
	Pliocene	<b>TERTIARY</b>		
	Miocene			Young Fold Mountains
	Oligocene			
Eocene	69	70		
<b>MESOZOIC</b>	Cretaceous	65	135	Death of the dinosaurs
	Jurassic	45	180	Great age of dinosaurs
	Triassic	45	225	Dinosaurs evolve
<b>PALÆOZOIC</b>	Permian	45	270	Armorican mountains
	Carboniferous	80	350	Coal measures
	Devonian	50	400	Great age of fishes
	Silurian	40	440	
	Ordovician	60	500	Caledonian mountains
	Cambrian	100	600	Life bursts on the Earth
	Pre-Cambrian	3900	4500	Almost no life at all

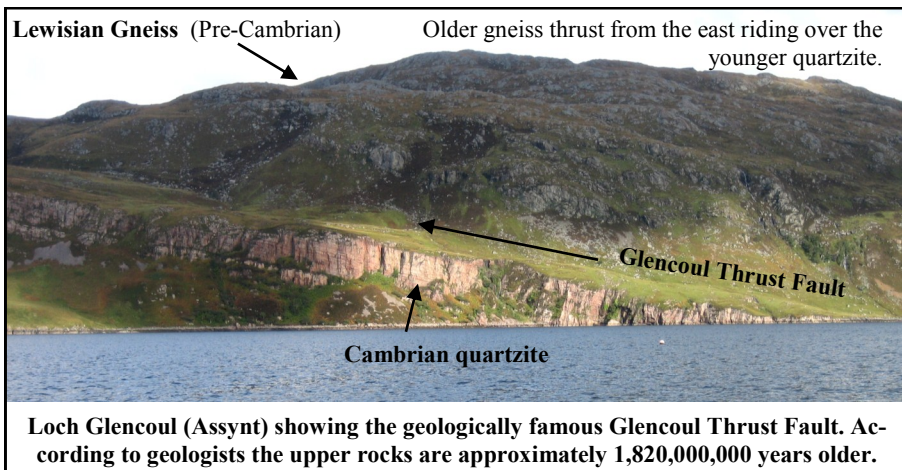
**THE GEOLOGICAL COLUMN**

around about 580,000,000 years old. All this is further complicated by having ancient Lewisian gneiss lying underneath the Cambrian quartzite (to the left of the picture below) - the quartzite is the meat in a gneiss sandwich. So how does the geologist decide on the relative ages (not, for the moment, the absolute ages) of the rocks?

The geologist 'knows' that life developed from the simple to the complex as the rocks get younger - because the Theory of Evolution tells him so. Thus he puts the simpler, bottom-grubbing sea creatures, such as trilobites (see *Genesis Accepted* Number 4), at the bottom of his Geological Column because they usually appear in

lower lying strata, and then he calls these strata 'old'. The fishes come next, so rocks with fish fossils in them (see *Genesis Accepted* Number 9) are obviously younger than those with trilobites in them but older than those with reptiles and plants in them, and so on. Some fossils are no use at all for dating purposes because they appear in many different strata and appear to have had a very long geological existence. Others are narrowly locational in time and strata, and so are called *zone fossils*. It is these zone fossils which geologists like to discover in a stratum because then they can date the rock accurately, so they believe.

Therefore, having put the strata into their ages according to the fossils found in them and based on their level of complexity from the simple to the complex, the evolutionary geologist then turns around and says that the Geological Column proves that life evolved from the simple to the complex. Well it would if that is how he organised it and drew it up in the first place! This is circular reasoning and actually proves absolutely nothing. All it demonstrates is the theory on which the Column is based, if we didn't know it already. You cannot decide to sort out the rocks on an assumption and then declare that the record found in the rocks proves the very assumption which was used to sort them out in the first place!



**Loch Glencoul (Assynt) showing the geologically famous Glencoul Thrust Fault. According to geologists the upper rocks are approximately 1,820,000,000 years older.**

### Macro-sedimentation

For many years, school children were taught a theory of river development based on the theories of a man by the name of W.M. Davis. He was an armchair theorist and dreamed up a long profile for rivers which showed steep gradients in the mountain regions and shallow ones on the flood plains. This was not a bad assumption, of course, but he decided that the youthful stage of a river would be characterized by swift-flowing streams down the steeper mountain gradients and with sluggish rivers on the old-age stage flood plains. It made sense - from an armchair. Then somebody went out and measured the river flow along the various stages. It was found that the swiftest flow of the river was in its last stage towards the estuary, on the flood plain, because velocity has to do more with the ratio of volume to channel size and not gradient.

It has long been assumed that sedimentation takes place by particles raining down on to the sea bed from above, until somebody went and performed an experiment to see if this was really the case. It wasn't!

Guy Berthault, a sedimentologist, conducted experiments in flow tanks, pouring particles into it to see how sedimentation actually happens.<sup>1</sup> To his surprise the strata built up, not from bottom to top, but from the side, i.e. left to right or right to left depending on your observational position. The layering was still there as the different sizes of particles graded out beautifully. The results of his experiments show that most sedimentary rocks, and therefore the fossils in them, are older not from bottom to top - vertically - but from left to right, from the direction the flow was coming. Such conditions apply best when there is a massive cataclysmic input similar to what geologists call a 'turbidity current' washing the sediment along. The sediments were not laid down in serene conditions in quiet, peaceful surroundings but rather were deposited swiftly under catastrophic conditions. There is, of course, some small build-up of ocean bottom ooze from a 'gentle rain' effect but this does not create either fossils or thick strata - the kind of fossiliferous strata we see over the land surfaces of every continent. These speak of

swift catastrophe over a short time scale, or scales. The 'gentle rain' scenario is quite simply a non-starter.

So what does the fossil record actually show?

### The layering of life

Let us imagine, for the moment, that an alien force from space came to Earth and wanted to preserve its life-forms for study back home. Being aliens, and therefore more advanced than we are, by definition (otherwise there would be no good story-lines for science-fiction writers to play with), they decided that the best way to achieve this was to pour a sort of quick-drying cement instantaneously over the whole Earth. Everything died in a flash and was perfectly preserved *in situ* in the cement. Then they towed Earth back to their galaxy for their own scientists to examine at their leisure. What did they find as they dug out everything?

As they looked at the lowest levels, which were from our sea and ocean beds, they observed bottom-grubbing creatures. A little higher and they found fish and other aquatic creatures. Higher still, close to the former shoreline, there were amphibians and reptiles, until at the top, on once dry ground, they found birds and mammals variously distributed along with plants, which appeared somewhere around the later amphibian layers. Does this picture seem familiar?

The fossil record which we see today is nothing more than a record of life which died almost in an instant, as if frozen *in situ* in a quick-drying cement. The creatures we see in the Cambrian, the first era with certain life forms in it, which seem to explode on to the Earth, were those which grubbed around on the pre-Flood sea bed (which would not have been as deep as we see in the oceans today; there were neither high mountains nor great ocean deeps on the antediluvian Earth - we will develop this scenario in future editions of *Genesis Accepted*). The more 'ancient' crystalline Pre-Cambrian rocks represent the originally created rocks, which were probably

metamorphosed at the time of the Flood, and should have no fossils in them. The fishes of the Devonian era were simply swimming at a higher level when the catastrophe suddenly overtook them. Likewise the amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals were overtaken as they occupied their ecological niche in the world. That coal measures come in the Carboniferous period, just after the age of the fishes, is hardly surprising since low-lying coastal forests would be metamorphosed *in situ* or they would have floated as rafts of logs on top of the sea. Some of the mammals would try to escape the cataclysm by running to higher ground, hence they would appear in the uppermost strata. The Geological Column, drawn up from the order fossils appear in the rocks, is nothing more, and nothing less, than a record of life that existed simultaneously and was buried at the same time over a period of a year - or possibly more correctly over about half-a-year as the waters prevailed for 150 days (Gen. 7:24). It is evidence of the layering of life and not of evolutionary progress.

### Conclusion

What we see as we look at the fossil record is a record of a world-wide cataclysm which buried creatures all over the globe in a very short time as a sudden catastrophe hit the world. The thick layers of sedimentary rocks over every continent did not take millions of years to accumulate but were created in days and months, mainly during one amazing year, not millions of years. Waters sloped around the face of the Earth with astonishing tsunami effects making Boxing Day 2004 look like gentle surf. Volcanoes spewed out magma. Mountains were created rapidly. Continents slid about in the greatest upheaval ever witnessed, and which God has promised would/will never be repeated (Gen. 8:21-22, 9:15). The fossils 'speak' of Noah's Flood and this scenario is consistent with the geological evidence. The only thing it is not consistent with is the normal explanation of events given by scientists, and others, who do not believe either in the biblical Flood, or in the Bible, or both.

<sup>1</sup> See the video film *Drama in the Rocks*.



A Pre-Cambrian landscape in Assynt. A landscape formed on metamorphic rocks which could have been God's original creation



# Giants

It seems to be a cardinal rule amongst Christians that Bible study is good for you - and so it is. We are often encouraged to spend more time reading the Bible than we usually do. However, just reading the Bible in a vacuum, with no specific purpose to it, may not always be productive. Meaningful study usually comes in the right setting and not all of the Bible is an exciting and beneficial read in the wrong context. We have to be ready for it or it could well be simply a waste of time, especially if we are going to delve into some of the more boring, or difficult, sections.

Being in the right mood one day, I decided to tackle 1 Chronicles. The first 12 chapters would definitely not be in anybody's top ten list of 'must read' passages, - apart from an interlude in chapter 10, and the early part of 11, which recounts the death of Saul and his sons and David's rise to power - they are pure genealogy and lists of people who begat and supported others. It's guaranteed to cure the most rampant of insomniacs!

However, there are some lovely little asides even amongst the boring bits. In chapter 2:21 we read: *'Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he was sixty years old, and she bore him Segub.'* The Holy Spirit does not waste words and there are many details we would love to know but simply are not told, like how many sisters Jesus had and what their names were, or what was Mrs Noah's name? Yet here we have a detail of no apparent importance that a man got married when he was 60. Then there is: *'Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters, but Sheshan had an Egyptian slave whose name was Jarha. So Sheshan gave his daughter in marriage to Jarha his slave, and she bore him Attai.'* (1 Chron 2:34-35). Think about this: an Israelite with an Egyptian slave! And the slave being allowed to marry into the family. Strange but true. But my excursion into 1 Chronicles led me into a quite surprising study of giants and on to thoughts of Noah, righteousness and sin, with very positive links back to Genesis.

## Giants in the Bible

The Bible is quite clear about giants; they existed. Not the 'Fee, fie, fo, fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman' variety, which, as an Englishman, always makes me think that that fairy story is racist! No, it talks about whole groups of people, not just the odd individuals, who were eight or nine feet tall, and that these peoples were far more common in the days immediately pre- and post-Flood even than they were in King

David's day. Goliath, the most famous giant of them all, was said to be 'one of the descendents of the giants.'

What alerted me to this study was the passage in 1 Chronicles where the following details are given: *'And after this there arose war with the Philistines at Gezer. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Sippai, who was one of the descendants of the giants, and the Philistines were subdued. And there was again war with the Philistines, and Elhanan the son of Jair struck down Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. And there was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature, who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number, and he also was descended from the giants. And when he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, struck him down. These were descended from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.'* (1 Chron 20:4-8).

Those who know me very well will immediately recognize what it was about this passage which caught my eye. It was not the fact that David and his relations and friends went about slaying more than just one giant, or that Goliath had a brother called Lahmi, very interesting though those facts may be. No, it was the little unexpected detail that one of the giants had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot! Let me explain.

## October 1941

In 1941 Mr Hitler was very busy bombing Liverpool where my parents lived. I was on the way, being due some time in November, and a friend of the family thought it would be a good idea for mum to stay with her in Huddersfield and have the baby in relative safety, so off she went. Then what seemed like a good idea started to go wrong. Being a scouser, and a true Lancastrian, the thought of not being born within the sound of the Liver Clock AND being born a Yorkshire man was

simply too much to take. I came a month early. Unfortunately, being war time, the medical aid was not at its best. Mum had a terrible time and the doctors only did the minimum for me and concentrated on saving my mum. They must have done a good job because, at the time of writing, she's 94 and still going strong.

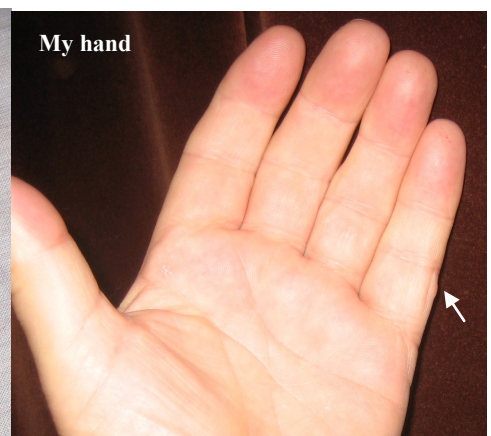
It was nine days later that she was deemed well enough to see and hold me for the first time - so much for modern theories of mother/baby bonding! The first thing mum did when she held me was to look at my fingers. The doctors present began to shift around uneasily as she did this. "Was my baby born with six fingers?" she asked, because she saw some little red marks on the outside of both of my little fingers. They shuffled even more and clearly didn't know what to say, until mum continued, "Don't worry. I was born with six fingers too so I know he's definitely mine." The doctors relaxed and became quite interested in this unusual phenomenon. If you look on the outside of both of mum's little fingers and on mine, you will see bumps where they removed these extra fingers - which would have been useless as fingers and just a nuisance had they left them on. Her stumps are bigger than mine because they put gut around hers and let them drop off but mine were amputated at birth. Both of us can attest to the fact that they hurt like crazy if they are accidentally knocked. Unlike the giant of David's day, mum and I both have the normal number of toes. (Neither of my children have, or had, the extra fingers.)

Queen Anne Boleyn apparently had extra fingers, and the people of her day thought such women were witches - I've no idea what they thought of men with them but I can guess. It's silly, of course, because it's a genetic malfunction; but just take great care when you're around me!

## A biblical giant hunt

What does the Bible have to say about giants? Let's go on a biblical giant hunt.

They glory under three names: the Ne-



Pictures of the stump on mum's and my left hand where our extra fingers once were

philim or Rephaim and the Anakim. They were called Nephilim before the Flood (Gen. 6:4). They were not necessarily giant-sized in this passage, though the Authorized Version translates the name thus, but were fierce, mighty warriors, who may well also have been somewhat on the large side. This inference can be deduced from Numbers 13:31-33, where the link is specifically made when the ten spies sent into Canaan brought home an adverse report: *'Then the men who had gone up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are. So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.'*" Nephilim is the general name for these fierce warriors and Anakim is the name of a specific tribe of them. In all other passages the name Nephilim has been replaced by Rephaim but we see the link as we remember the above quotation about the Nephilim and marry it with these words about the Rephaim: *'The Emim formerly lived there, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim. Like the Anakim they are also counted as Rephaim, but the Moabites call them Emim.'* (Deut 2:10-12).

The faithless Jews of the Exodus were not afraid of a normal army of normal-sized men, they were scared stiff of an army of giants! In David's day one giant only had the whole Jewish army trembling with fear; in Joshua's day they completely lost heart in the face of such overwhelming odds. With the vantage point of hindsight, we may deride their lack of faith but they didn't know then what we know now. The real comment is on the totally amazing faith of Caleb and Joshua who truly thought that 'one plus God is a majority'. Forty years on, and a lot of learning to rely on the Lord later, we read Moses' challenge to them: *'Hear, O Israel: you are to cross over the Jordan today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves, cities great and fortified up to heaven, a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you have heard it said, 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?' Know therefore today that he who goes over before you as a consuming fire is the LORD your God. He will destroy them and subdue them before you. So you shall drive them out and make them perish quickly, as the LORD has promised you.'*" (Deut 9:1-3).

And they went; and they did it, just as the Lord promised them that they would. Summarizing the conquest in Joshua we read: *'And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill country, from*

*Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua devoted them to destruction with their cities. There was none of the Anakim left in the land of the people of Israel. Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did some remain.'* (Josh 11:21-22). Joshua killed all the giants except a few in Gaza, Ashdod and Gath. And where did Goliath and his merry men come from? - Gath! In both 2 Samuel 20:18, 22, and 1 Chronicles 20:4, 8, we read that these giants were descended from the giants in Gath. Goliath wasn't a Philistine. He was probably a mercenary hired into the Philistine army. It was David and his men who finally finished off all of these giants.

#### From whom did these giants descend?

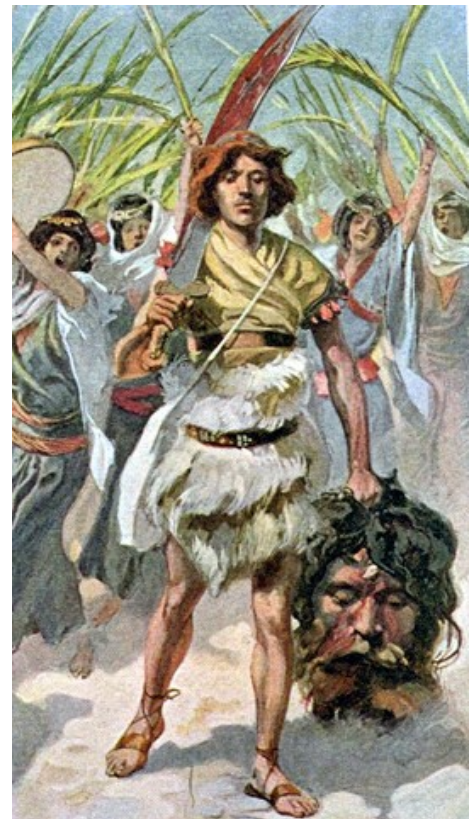
We remember that all post-Flood giants must have come from Noah. Indeed everybody comes from Noah on the male side. Not all of us need to have had Mrs Noah as our sole genetic mother because Shem, Ham and Japheth took wives before the Flood. We all must go back to Eve as our sole source of genes from the female side. All of the giants must have come genetically from Noah through one of his sons, but which one? Consequently all evil people groups, as well as all the relatively 'good' people groups have a common father in Noah. But can we identify the son with the rogue element in his loins? And here is where all the boring genealogies - the begets begats and begots, come into their own.

#### Noah's drunkenness

In Genesis 9 there is a little cameo incident recorded, which is quite often glossed over. *'Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers.'*

*He also said, Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant.'*" (Gen 9:20-27). [We will be considering this passage and Noah's Curse at some future date when we look at the topic of slavery - G.A.F.]

This must have happened many years after the Flood for only eight souls came through it and here Ham has at least four



David brings Goliath's head to King Saul

children, the youngest of which was Canaan. Ham saw his dad drunk and naked lying in his tent, gloated over it in some way and went and told his brothers, but they refused to look and covered their dad to hide his shame and nakedness. Ham's descendants are cursed through the line of Canaan, and it is quite probable that it was actually Canaan who stumbled originally on the unseemly scene of his naked grandfather and told his dad, Ham, who then did absolutely the wrong thing. Is this then the rogue? Have we identified the son who had the 'bad' genes?

#### A bit of boring genealogy!

1 Chronicles lists exactly the same people as in Genesis 10, when we come to look at the genealogies of Shem, Ham and Japheth. So let's use the Genesis 10 version and see what we can see. Without turning to Bible dictionaries to see what all these 'names' were associated with, I'm going to mark in bold and underline those of whom I am aware, were in opposition to God and His ways at some point in the biblical narrative.

*'The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD.' The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is*

the great city. Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, **Cas-luhim** (from whom the **Philistines** came), and Caphtorim. Canaan fathered **Sidon** his firstborn and Heth, and the **Jebusites**, the **Amorites**, the **Girgashites**, the **Hivites**, the Arkites, the Sinites, the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites dispersed. And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon in the direction of Gerar as far as **Gaza**, and in the direction of **Sodom**, **Gomorrhah**, Admah, and Zeboim, as far as Lasha. These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.' (Gen 10:6-20).

I have highlighted 17 names from that list, and if I'd bothered to look at them all carefully, I probably would have been able to add more to it. But I didn't need to do this because when you read the genealogies of Shem and Japheth you reach the grand total of --- NONE! That is until you get to Esau and Ishmael, from Abraham, but they are well off the Genesis 10 lists. There is no doubt at all which one of Noah's sons was the rebel or was carrying the defective gene. The Anakim, post-Flood Nephilim and/or Rephaim came through Ham's line, Goliath and all.

#### Salvation through Noah

Realising the above makes you think about certain aspects of the salvation brought through Noah. We understand that when God told Noah that *'My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years,'* (Gen 6:3-4), God was setting a time-scale of 120 years for the building of the Ark from when He spoke to the coming of the Flood. None of Noah's sons was born at that time; it was to be another twenty years before Shem appeared. In a previous *Genesis Accepted*, when considering Noah's wife (GA Number 5), we were led to conclude that in all possibility Noah wasn't even married himself at the time of that promise. If that is correct, it was truly the righteousness of one man which saved the world. This makes him very much a type of saviour, of whom Jesus, of course, was the antitype. The other seven got a free ride in the Ark, as it were, and must have supported Dad, but salvation came by him alone.

Peter picks up on this theme in his two Letters. As part of a longer argument in his First Letter, he says: *'...when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water...'* (1 Peter 3:20), and, similarly in his Second Letter he says, *'...if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;...'* (2 Peter 2:5-6), it is Noah who is highlighted and the others are merely throwaway lines, especially in his Second Letter where he calls them just 'seven others'. Clearly it was Noah's righteousness which saved the world not the righteousness of his family.

#### The antitype of Christ

This last point is worth emphasizing again just to make it more pointedly. Noah is a Christ-figure, who no doubt had a loving and supportive family behind him but they were not the ones through whom salvation came at the time of the Flood. Jesus alone is the One through whom our salvation came. It was not through His mother, wonderful woman that she must have been, nor through His brothers and sisters, or indeed His other close relatives like James and John, and John the Baptist, that our final salvation comes.

#### Our own responsibility

I am certain that before too long after Jesus in the history of the church, some of the children of His family, His nieces and nephews, would fall away and drift into apostasy - as would some of the Apostles' descendents. No family has the total claim on unending faithfulness within it. Each individual is capable of producing godly offspring and ungodly offspring. It's been that way since Adam, and some of God's greatest champions have produced wayward children: ask Gideon, Samuel, David, etc. That is why we alone are responsible to God for ourselves. There is no guarantee of salvation for my children simply because I remain faithful. Also there is no eternal condemnation for me if my children go off the rails - though there would be great sadness for me, of course. Ezekiel 18 seems to have been written specifically to make this point.

#### Ham's position

We have identified the son with the obviously flawed genes in his make-up. That, however, is no immediate comment on his salvation, or otherwise. After all, if we say that Ham was lost because he had the bad blood in him and many of his descendents went way off the spiritual rails, we would have to say that of Noah too, and Mrs Noah, because they produced Ham and passed on their genes to him. By this reasoning nobody can be saved, which is just about correct because salvation comes by the grace of God as a gift. Nobody can be saved on their own merits. God looked at Noah and his family immediately after the Flood and made this amazing statement about this one righteous family: *'... the LORD said in his heart, I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth.'* (Gen 8:21, emphasis added). He looked at Noah and knew that no matter how wonderful he was, things would start to go wrong all over again. And it didn't take too long, did it?

But what about Ham? Where did he stand? Where does he stand? The Bible gives us absolutely no clue at all but one thing we do know is that he stood right behind his dad for about 90 years as the rest of the world laughed at him. He stood alongside him as he preached to the fierce, faithless millions over many years. Like Noah, Ham had no concept of a Flood, or of rain, or even of what a boat/Ark might be designed to do. But when all the world turned their backs on God and His message, Ham stayed faithful, as did the other lads and their wives. I think that counts for something. To stand up for God and His ways and commands when all the world is laughing at you, and to do it over many many years, takes great faith. And doesn't the Bible tell us that we are justified by grace through faith? (Eph. 2:8). It's not my job at all to pronounce on the life of anybody, as far as salvation is concerned, but I'm going to stick my neck out and say that I both hope, and expect to meet Ham in heaven. Sadly I can't say that for many of his offspring.

I believe that all eight of them who went into that Ark by faith were, in every and any way you look at it, spiritual giants!

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