

# GENESIS ACCEPTED



**NUMBER 12**

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# The Womb of the Ice

Believers in the Genesis record as being literally true have to accommodate the accepted geological fact that there was an Ice Age, and that it came within the last 6,000 years. The questions then range through: 'When did it happen?', 'How did it happen?' and 'Is there any record of it happening in the Bible?' You might be surprised to know that the answer to the last question is quite easy; it is 'Yes!'. The problem in finding it is that when we read the verses which refer to it we are so used to the things it describes that we are deflected from its real importance when we place it in its context.

## Back again to Job

We have mentioned in the past that the Book of Job probably predates even Genesis. Certainly it sheds further light on to events from those earliest of times. References to creation and God's thinking are abundantly present especially when

God is chiding Job and his friends in the later chapters (38-41). There, as you might expect, we find the reference we are looking for, in chapter 38:28-30: "*Has the rain a father, or who has begotten the drops of dew? From whose womb did the ice come forth, and who has given birth to the frost of heaven? The waters become hard like stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.*"

For this to have had any meaning at all to those listening men, they must have known about the ice catastrophe. They knew that the ice came suddenly as it popped out of the heavens as if from a womb during a birth process. It didn't just arrive slowly as cold winters and cool short summers became common. It was also an event known to men who lived in a part of the world where ice, apart from the tops of high mountains, is unknown normally. Yet they not only knew about it but also that the seas froze over too. These were men who dwelt in the Middle East where heat, not cold, is the accepted norm, yet God could comfortably use this 'ice-birth' happening to question their knowledge and understanding. Was this Job the same person as Jobab (Gen, 10:29), the nephew of Peleg in the godly line of Seth and in whose day the land was divided (Gen. 10:25), who was living in the land of his relative Uz (Gen. 10:23 and Job 1:1)? We will never know this side of Paradise but it seems that the advent of ice and the freezing of seas were events known to Job and witnessed by men. This places it after the Flood

though the mechanism and origination could have been closely linked if not part of the same event.

## Our far-from-peaceful Solar System!

In our previous edition of *Genesis Accepted* (Number 11), we suggested a mechanism which could have been used by God to cause the Flood. It was that a large planetoid, possibly larger than the Moon, had a close encounter with the Earth causing all sorts of devastation down below. This would include the breaking up and reorganisation of the original single continent (Continental Drift), mountain chains to form due to the gravitational attraction of somewhat plastic rocks, huge masses of magma to pour out over the surface with the breaking up of the crust to release trapped juvenile water, and some serious melting of its own ice to dump massive quantities of water down from the sky ('the windows of the heavens were opened,' Gen. 7:11).

Is there any evidence that such a scenario has any credibility? The answer is definitely 'Yes' to this question too. The Solar System is replete with evidence of a turbulent past quite consistent with such happenings, though you won't hear too much about them on 'The Sky at Night'!

## Unwritten scientific laws

There are some things which happen in space, known to scientists and which they are happy to acknowledge *do* occur, but they will only admit to just as long as they are deemed to have happened deep in space and way back in time. They will rarely, if ever, admit that they happened to the Earth in the recent past, i.e. in the lifetime and memory of peoples. These things concern close encounters of astral bodies with each other such that great physical disturbances occurred. These can be powerful enough to tilt planets on their axes, make them rotate in retrograde fashion (spin round the wrong way from normal), and cause moons to rotate backwards and even, at times, disintegrate.<sup>1</sup>

Scientists are more and more prepared to admit to minor collisions, which can have short term devastating effects in local areas, but not to major ones such as could have caused the Flood. To do so would be to undermine the principle of gradualism which underpins modern geological, biological and astronomical theory. The threat



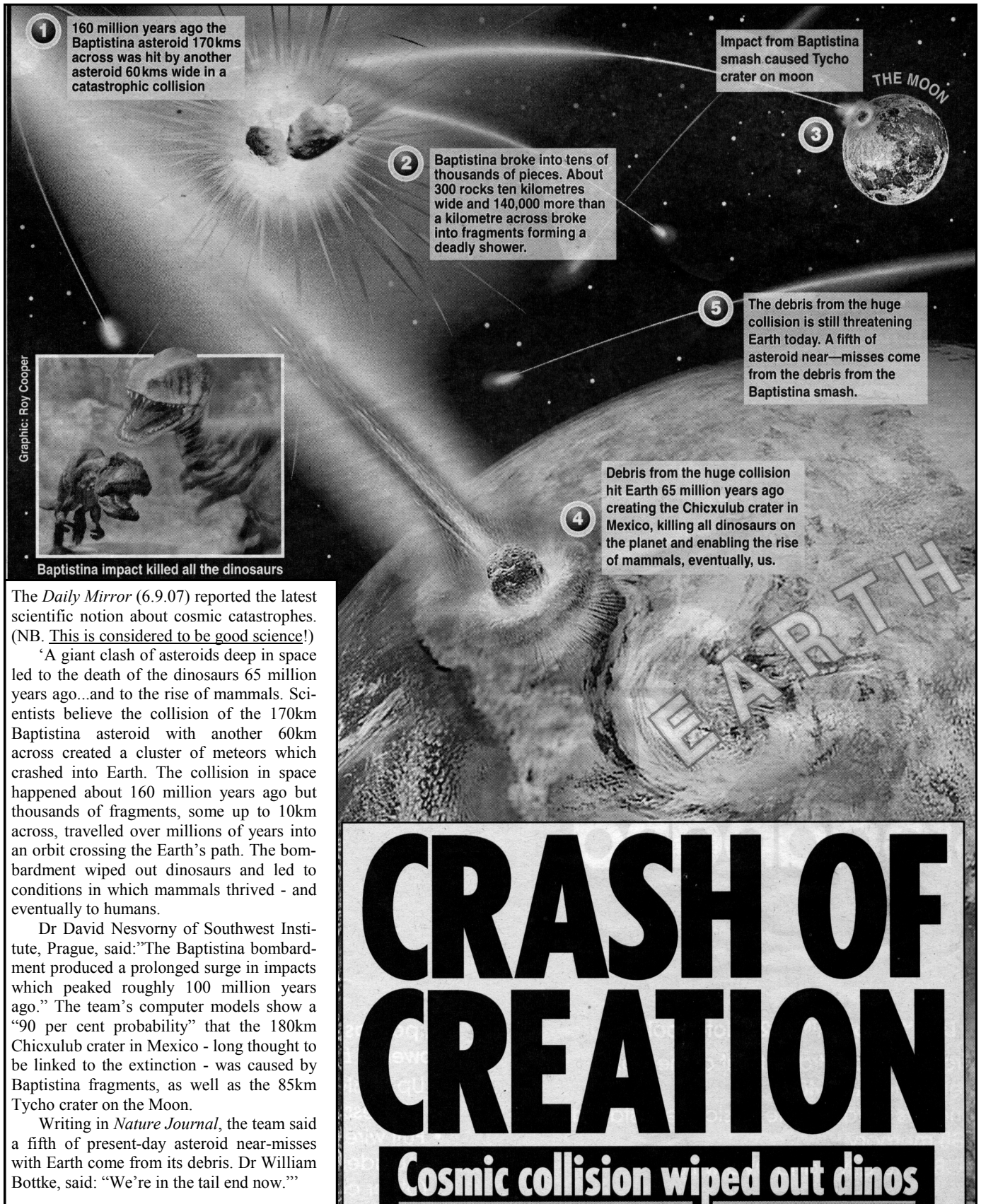
Devastation at Tunguska

to the Earth from asteroids is now being recognized. Most frequently they are offered as an explanation of the death of the dinosaurs, and the rise of mammals - see the picture on page 2 - (fulfilling the acceptability of such a scenario because it is way back in time, 65 million years ago by their guesstimates) and plans are afoot to zap any that they might spot coming too close for comfort, with nuclear weapons. They have already been forced to admit that the Tunguska Event of 1908, which devastated remote parts of Siberia on 30th June, was probably a meteorite which penetrated the atmosphere. (Watch out on television for some coverage of this on, or near to, its one hundredth anniversary this coming June.)

## Evidence of catastrophic astral collisions

The scientific acceptability of astral collisions has long been recognized. In the 1940s and 50s scientists were propounding the 'Tidal Wave Theory' for the origin of the Solar System. Simply put it is that a passing star, at least as massive as the Sun, came close enough to it to draw a filament of gas from its surface by gravitational attraction. This unknown star passed too quickly to capture the filament but was able to give it its momentum so that it spun around the Sun anticlockwise.<sup>1</sup> This filament cooled down into 'droplets' which became the planets. The theory is now rejected but not because of the fly-by/close-encounter element - that is quite acceptable because it supposedly happened way back in time!

When we look at the outer planets in the region of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, something very strange indeed has happened in the past. Scientists accept that their original, uniform orbits have been disturbed. Uranus has a retrograde (clockwise) rotation on its axis, which is tilted 90° to the plane of the ecliptic (the Earth's tilt is 23½° and gives us our seasons). Triton, a moon of Neptune, rotates in retrograde fashion around it. Pluto is not always the outermost planet. For a short while on its orbit it crosses Neptune's orbit coming inside it, so much so many now think that it cannot be called a planet as it was once one of Neptune's moons. I think



Graphic: Roy Cooper

**1** 160 million years ago the Baptistina asteroid 170kms across was hit by another asteroid 60kms wide in a catastrophic collision

Impact from Baptistina smash caused Tycho crater on moon

THE MOON

**2** Baptistina broke into tens of thousands of pieces. About 300 rocks ten kilometres wide and 140,000 more than a kilometre across broke into fragments forming a deadly shower.

**3**

**5** The debris from the huge collision is still threatening Earth today. A fifth of asteroid near-misses come from the debris from the Baptistina smash.



Baptistina impact killed all the dinosaurs

**4**

Debris from the huge collision hit Earth 65 million years ago creating the Chicxulub crater in Mexico, killing all dinosaurs on the planet and enabling the rise of mammals, eventually, us.

The *Daily Mirror* (6.9.07) reported the latest scientific notion about cosmic catastrophes. (NB. This is considered to be good science!)

'A giant clash of asteroids deep in space led to the death of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago...and to the rise of mammals. Scientists believe the collision of the 170km Baptistina asteroid with another 60km across created a cluster of meteors which crashed into Earth. The collision in space happened about 160 million years ago but thousands of fragments, some up to 10km across, travelled over millions of years into an orbit crossing the Earth's path. The bombardment wiped out dinosaurs and led to conditions in which mammals thrived - and eventually to humans.

Dr David Nesvorny of Southwest Institute, Prague, said:"The Baptistina bombardment produced a prolonged surge in impacts which peaked roughly 100 million years ago." The team's computer models show a "90 per cent probability" that the 180km Chicxulub crater in Mexico - long thought to be linked to the extinction - was caused by Baptistina fragments, as well as the 85km Tycho crater on the Moon.

Writing in *Nature Journal*, the team said a fifth of present-day asteroid near-misses with Earth come from its debris. Dr William Bottke, said: "We're in the tail end now."

# CRASH OF CREATION

## Cosmic collision wiped out dinos

this is most probably correct. How can this be?

In an article in the *New Scientist* (6.9.79), we read on page 733: 'The suggestion first made in 1936, [is] that Pluto was originally a satellite of Neptune. Some cataclysmic event in the distant past had ejected Pluto from its orbit about Neptune, [and]

*simultaneously reversed the motion of Triton... But what caused Pluto's ejection? Harrington and van Flandern (of the US Naval Observatory in Washington DC) propose that the passage of a massive object through the Neptunian system caused the disruption... They find that a mass two to five times as heavy as the Earth, passing slowly through the orbits of*

*Neptune's moons could have resulted in systems similar to the present day Pluto and Neptune... All this proves nothing - but it does indicate what could have happened.'*

The same 'collision' sequence could have affected Uranus causing its axis to flip 90° and spin backwards. It could even have continued on an inner course and come near

enough to Earth at the time of the Flood to initiate that catastrophe. The important point just for now is not that it did but that this scenario is quite acceptable as a serious postulate by the scientific fraternity.

### Icy satellites and planetary rings

The presence of icy moons in the Solar System is well attested. Europa and Ganymede, two of Jupiter's moons, are known to



have a large ice content and may even be made almost wholly of ice, apart from a small rocky core. Pluto's moon, Charon, is mainly water ice, and Halley's comet is now known to be a dirty snowball with a rocky core.

The rings around Saturn, Uranus and Neptune have an ice and dust content. They are thought to be the fragmentary remains of planetoids (asteroids, comets or small planetary moons) which came too near to the planets and were torn apart by gravitational forces; their remains being held there in orbit by the planet's superior gravity ever since. There is a limit to how close heavenly bodies can approach one another before the smaller one disintegrates. It is known as the Roche Limit or Law.

### The Roche Limit

The Roche Law applies to bodies over 200 miles in diameter. It is calculated that bodies of nearly equal density can only approach to within 2.45 times the radius of the larger body before gravitational forces tear the smaller body apart. (Our Moon has a Roche Limit of about 10,000 miles and is known to be receding from us slowly. This puts an upper limit on the age of the Earth/Moon system. Genesis says that the Moon was made just after the Earth.)

We looked at the effects of tidal disturbances on the Earth caused by gravitational attraction of an astral body in *Genesis Accepted* Number 11, 'Towards a Flood Mechanism'. At just under 10,000 miles away from the Earth a planetoid, or similar body, would disintegrate showering the surface with rock fragments. If the planetoid was composed largely of ice, its Roche Limit would be less - closer to 9,000 miles in fact - and depending on its angle of approach the ice would either melt and fall to the Earth as water, literally dropping out of the sky - which is the Flood scenario - or would dump mainly ice on to its surface, which we pro-

pose as the Ice Age scenario. Again let me emphasize that this is not bad science, it merely 'offends' the unquestioned scientific axiom of uniformity and the unwritten law of 'only deep in space or way back in time' to make it acceptable.

### Linking the Flood Catastrophe and the Ice Age Catastrophe

The celestial catastrophe which brought about the Flood was the greatest and most devastating catastrophe ever. It destroyed the antediluvian world, split the original single continent into many fragments and pushed them around the globe, created belts of fold mountains in swathes across the surface, buckling and twisting the plastic rocks as it did so. Huge tsunami swept countless millions of tons of sediment over vast tracts of land, and all terrestrial creatures - including humans - perished, as well as millions of aquatic ones too, leaving millions of fossils buried in sedimentary rock layers all over the Earth. Our axis, once nearly upright, was tilted 23½° from the vertical thereby initiating the seasons as we now know them, with God comforting us by guaranteeing them for as long as the Earth remains (Genesis 8:22). Drainage of waters as temporary dams burst would have carved canyons and valleys, which rivers alone never could have done - this includes the Grand Canyon.

Though God promised never again to destroy the Earth by a flood, this was far from the end of the matter as far as threats from the sky were concerned. Indeed much of the early history of the Bible can only properly be understood once we realize this. The sons of Noah found it difficult to keep their off-spring faithful and loyal to a God you could not see when there were real threats from the planets. Even in the godly line of Seth, Terah, Abraham's father, was an idolater (Josh. 24:2) and Rachel stole her father's household gods (Gen. 31:19ff).

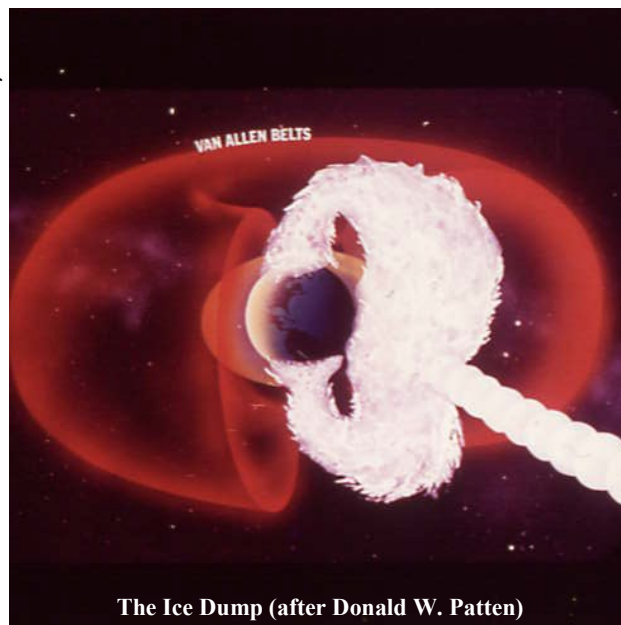
It was not long before these astral bodies were viewed as gods in their own right who had to be placated. Ancient peoples worshipped these gods and all had planetary links. Peoples whom we believe were not deeply connected with each other still worshipped similar deities from above. They spent countless man-hours on their obsession with the sky, building pyramids, stone circles and henge monuments like Stonehenge. If all was as serene in those days as it is today, why was this so? We will return to a consideration of these sorts

of problems in later Numbers of *Genesis Accepted*. For now you can reference the book I advertised in Number 3, *Speak Through The Earthquake, Wind And Fire*, by G.A. Fisher, Countyvise, 1982. (60p to you if you pick it up from me, or £1.50 to have it posted - end of advert again!)

The reason for all of this was that the satellite which brought the Flood as some of its ice melted did not simply disappear. It became entangled with the Earth for quite some time, though of no actual threat until, once again, it took up a collision course. We suggest about 104 years after the Flood. Though now considerably smaller, it approached at a different angle and completely disintegrated but this time it dumped its ice on to the Earth's surface as ice.

### The Ice Dump

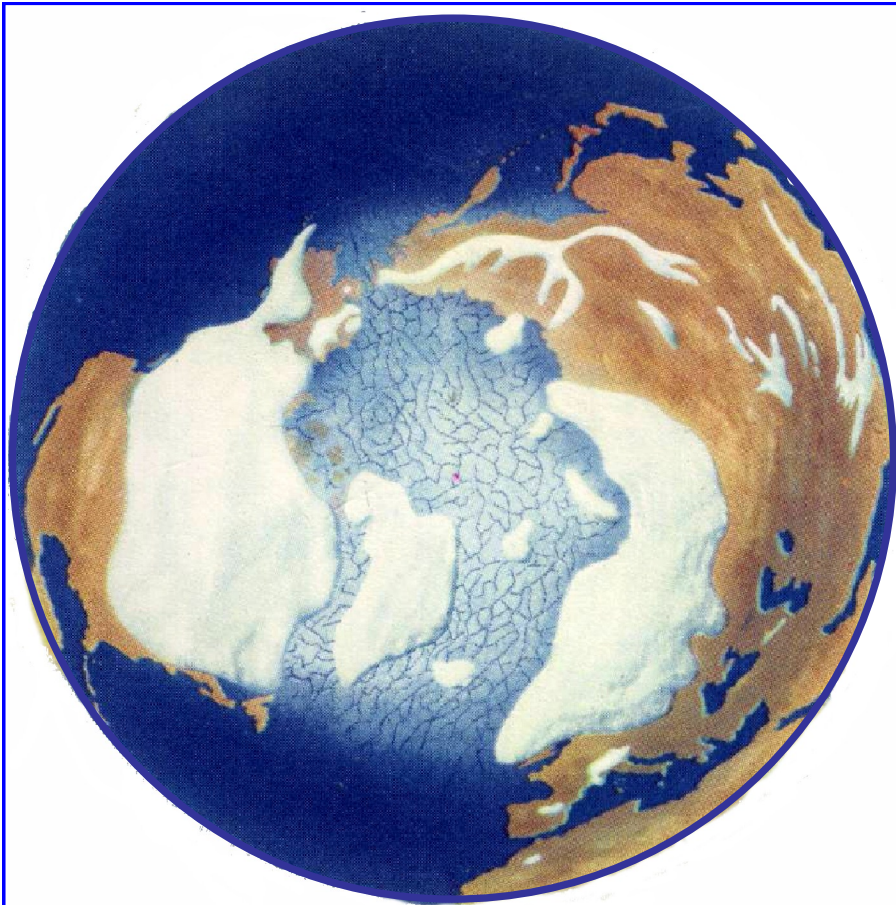
There is no need to doubt that the high mountains of the Himalayas, Alps, Andes and other great mountain chains would have had snow and ice on them immediately post Flood. These would form local glaciers, but the main dump was yet to come.



Coming in on a direct collision course, as opposed to an angle, the planetoid would disintegrate at around 9,000 miles. Its ice carried on earthwards, picking up an electrical charges as it went. This deflected it to the magnetic poles where the magnetic shield is at its weakest and the ice was able to drop swiftly out of the sky, as if the sky gave birth to it, burying the land and freezing the sea in the polar regions - just as God reminded Job. It caught and buried animals, like mammoths, busily eating temperate vegetation, freezing them instantly and irreversibly. (We will be considering the whole question of the mammoths later.)

### Accordance with the geological evidence

All of this may sound fanciful to readers who are not familiar with these concepts. After all, not even the regular Creationist



**Map showing the glaciated areas of the northern hemisphere**

literature carries this sort of scenario. For more detailed study I can recommend the work of Donald W. Patten,<sup>2</sup> in combination with Immanuel Velikovsky,<sup>3</sup> who had inspired him.

There are many puzzling geological features of the Ice Age. Not all polar latitudes were glaciated, as can be seen from the Reader's Digest map above. Large tracts of Siberia, and a significant area of Alaska, were never glaciated. These lands are still frozen solid in winter and Siberia is the cold pole of the northern hemisphere. Looking at the map it can be seen that the centre of the ice cap is close to the magnetic pole, which migrates over time, but bears no relationship to the axial pole, which logically it should if the ice came purely from terrestrial sources. This accords perfectly with our 'Ice Dump' theory.

Secondly I was further able to confirm our theory whilst on holiday in Antarctica in February 2007 (see photograph on the front). We had a glaciologist and Antarctica specialist lecturing to us. I questioned her saying that I have my own theory of the cause of the Ice Age and it would suggest that the greatest thickness of the ice should be close to the magnetic pole. "Where is it?" I asked her. She confirmed that this was indeed correct, though she never asked me what 'my theory' was! I was also able to ask her how the ice got there since the Antarctic is a desert

where very little precipitation occurs. It simply should not be thickly covered in ice. Her reply was that it had to come whilst Antarctica was lying in more temperate latitudes and then it drifted, under the influence of continental drift, to where it is today! I quietly passed on the ludicrous nature of that reply.

The ice thickens as you go inland. This should not be the case if it resulted from snowfall coming in on terrestrial winds. Maximum precipitation should be on the coastal fringes as the winds dropped their moisture over land, getting less and less as you go inland. Both Poles are deserts, cold deserts of course, but they receive less than 10 inches (250cm) of precipitation per year. Such small amounts could never originate or sustain an Ice Age at either end of the globe let alone thick ice cover. The coasts receive much more snow than inland areas but the ice is thicker inland. This simply does not stack up under normal geographical conditions and interpretation. However, it does under the Ice Dump theory we propose.

Ice core samples from Greenland and elsewhere reveal quite a quantity of volcanic ash mingling in with the ice. This has led some scientists to suggest that the glaciation was triggered by increased vulcanism clouding the sky and lowering temperatures sufficiently to produce the effects

we understand as the Ice Age, or Ice Ages, as geologists prefer, since they 'recognize' at least four major ice advances. Our Flood/Ice Age position accepts that there was amazingly increased volcanic activity during the Flood, with vast quantities of material being pumped out over the face of the Earth. During the 100+ years from the Flood to the Ice Age such activity would certainly have continued, and at a much higher level than we see today, though massively diminished by Flood standards. We would expect to find this evidence stored in the ice, but it was not the cause of the glaciations, rather it was simply associated with it. It had its origin in the same cause as did both the ice and the Flood waters.

The geological facts also support a very sudden arrival of the ice - you cannot deep-freeze a mammoth by gradual means! It has to be swift and instantaneous. There are not just the occasional mammoth remains up in and near to the icy regions of the world but rather there is evidence of massive herds of them, numbering thousands, which were wiped out instantly. Occasionally we find almost complete carcasses entombed in the permafrost, though these are rare. We are going to look at the question of the mammoths in a later article, as we said, because this is a very significant topic with a bearing on this vitally important subject.

### **Conclusion**

There is no possible way that here we can cover every aspect of this topic, and the one in Number 11 on the Flood. I believe that the explanation presented is absolutely consistent with both the biblical record and the geological evidence. Not only this, I also believe that, though the ideas may be strange to most of our readers, they are perfectly valid scientifically. This doesn't mean therefore that they are correct as the explanation for these two massively important events, just that they are believable. To accept it does not mean that you have to put your mind into neutral, or reverse, or even worse to stop thinking altogether! What is hoped is that you will examine the details and possibly learn to think a little outside the box which the world of regular science presents. Since that world will not accept global catastrophism as a valid explanation for anything at all, because it violates their presupposition that 'the present is the key to the past', this cannot be accommodated inside those parameters, so is rejected. If we can think biblically and independently as a result, we will have achieved a great deal.

<sup>1</sup> Astronomers imagine themselves out in space looking down over the North Pole when they describe rotations as 'normal' or 'retrograde' (anticlockwise or clockwise).

<sup>2</sup> *The Biblical Flood and the Ice Epoch*, D.W. Patten, Pacific Meridian Publishing Company, 1966.

<sup>3</sup> *Earth In Upheaval*, Immanuel Velikovsky, Gollancz, 1956.

# Before Babel

Sometimes, but not nearly enough times, you are studying along one line and thinking about a specific problem, when you get an amazing flash of insight, or could it be inspiration(?), about something entirely different, and you want to shout out like a latter day Archimedes: 'Eureka!' Recently I had a 'eureka moment' when a whole new piece of a biblical jigsaw puzzle I'm trying to put together fell into place, but it wasn't the piece I was looking for. It was totally unexpected. I was bowled over by it. I don't expect you to have exactly the same feelings as I did about it, nevertheless I still want to tell you what it is!

## Background

I wasn't well. I was fighting a cold virus Barbara had thoughtfully brought back from America which threatened to lay me low. It failed to take a hold properly but it did make me feel under par. We often call this 'feeling blue'. I'd just taken delivery of a book I had tried to get hold of for a long time, which cheered me up. It was: *Maps of the Ancient Sea Kings* by Charles Hapgood. (1966, reprinted 1996). It won't be everybody's idea of happy bedside reading, and indeed it isn't easy going, though he tries to make it readable. I'd known about its existence since 1980 when I bought and read, *The World Atlas of Mysteries*, (Pan Books). It is referenced there. The 'Atlas' gives fascinating details of many mysteries which simply cannot be explained by modern theories or beliefs. I've got several books along these lines but this 'Atlas', I think, is the best of the lot. Though I knew of Hapgood's book in 1980, I'd not bothered to follow up on it until now.

It was going to Antarctica in January/February 2007 which triggered my interest

once more. On the cruise we had lectures by a university geographer, who specialized in Antarctica. Some of the things she told us awakened ideas I'd been playing around with for many years. Unbeknown to her, what she said seemed to give confirmation of the theories I've come to believe are the true story of the geological history of Antarctica and particularly of the Ice Age (see previous article). I believe that we have to fit our ideas in these fields into a 6,000-year time-frame, because that's the biblical time-frame for the creation of the world. It is a fascinating exercise and it's not always easy to do it. We have been covering many of the points in recent issues of *Genesis Accepted*, so regular readers should be up to speed on them!

To review some of the more significant points so that you get the gist of what you need to know for our purposes here about these things, or, more correctly, my belief about these things, is quite simply this:

1. The pre-Flood world only consisted of one super-continent and one super-ocean.
2. This super-continent had only low-lying hills and no mountain ranges in it, so it wasn't too hard to cover it entirely with flood-water. Conversely the ocean was relatively shallow by today's standards.
3. During the Flood the super-continent broke up very quickly into the land masses we see today. The mountain ranges and deep oceanic troughs were created then, swiftly during that devastating year. Therefore the whole world and all the landscapes Noah found when he and his family came out of the Ark was totally and utterly different from the ones they'd known just over twelve months previously. They would have been grateful and thankful to have survived but they would have felt ill at ease in this strange, brand-new environment.

4. Lots of other things changed too, including the climates, but the Ice Age came later - approximately 104 years later, in fact.<sup>1</sup> It was witnessed by people, including Job, where God makes a passing, but highly significant, reference to it in Job 38:29-30.

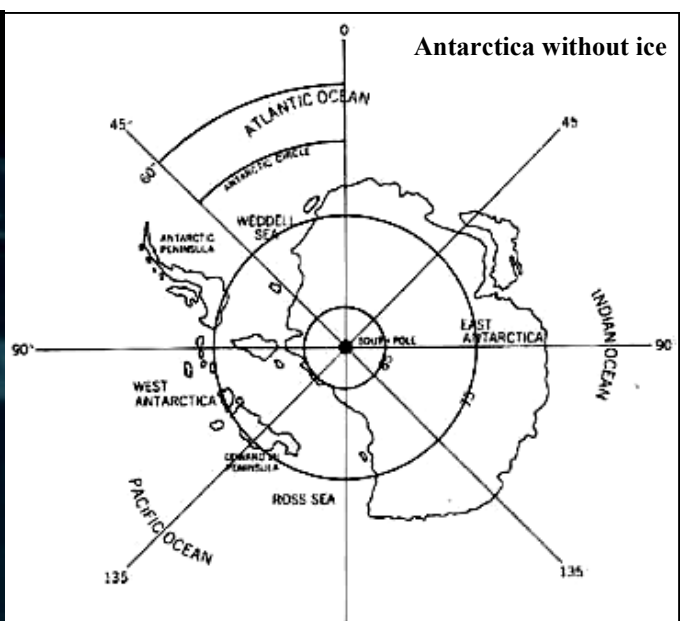
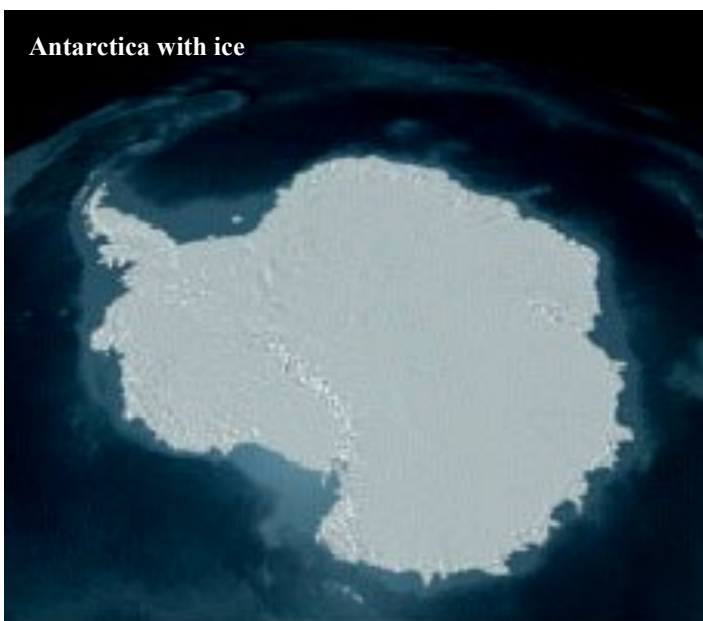
## If this is correct

Now, if I am correct about the Ice Age, that it came a little, but significant, while after the Flood, and that its arrival was witnessed by people, then areas of land which today are still under ice resulting from the Ice Age, like Antarctica - or show evidence of having once been glaciated, such as Scotland, Wales and the Lake District, etc. - must have been ice-free at the end of the Flood. Charles Hapgood's book claims to show that ancient peoples made charts and maps of the Antarctic continent when it had no ice covering it. It wasn't a single continent but was a large land mass with serious sized islands off-shore. The International Geophysical Year of 1958 used sonar soundings to determine the nature of the land under the ice cap and came up with land masses showing the ancient maps to be essentially correct. The only answer for this is that the ice is indeed a late-comer on to the Antarctic scene.

Our cruise lecturer showed us a map of the true land-mass of Antarctica and this triggered my interest in the maps of the Ancient Sea Kings. She also confirmed several other facts which fit my theories but confuse the regular theorists, including herself, as was obvious from her replies to some of my questions (see 'The Womb of the Ice' in this issue). So I got what I wanted from the book, but that was expected. It was the reason I bought the book but it was nothing to do with my 'eureka moment'!

## The Piri Re'is Map

What the book by Hapgood shows very convincingly is that the main map he was examining, the Piri Re'is Map, is based on



ancient maps, which we have lost today but in fact actually predated the great civilisations known to us. The Piri Re'is Map itself actually dates from 1513 and is credited to Piri Ibn Haji Mehmed, an admiral of the Turkish navy, also known as Piri Re'is. Furthermore the civilisation which produced these, now lost, maps must have been very advanced in all sorts of ways.

### A Vanished Civilization

Now, before we consider a little from Hapgood's conclusions under the chapter heading of 'A civilization that vanished', remember that this civilization came before the ones like Egypt, Babylonia, etc, which were going strong in Abraham's day, but came after the Flood and before the coming of the Ice Age. Remember too that I am trying to build up a picture of the ancient world on biblical lines and with biblical spectacles on – in other words, *How does this all fit in with the story in the Bible? Does the Bible tell us of, or hint at, the same things?*

Now let us look at some of the things from Hapgood's book:

*'The evidence presented by the ancient maps appears to suggest the existence in remote times, before the rise of any of the known cultures, of a true civilization, of a comparatively advanced sort, which either was localized in one area but had worldwide commerce, or was, in a real sense, a worldwide culture. This culture, at least in some respects, may well have been more advanced than the civilizations of Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, and Rome. In astronomy, nautical science, mapmaking and possibly ship-building, it was perhaps more advanced than any state of culture before the 18th Century of the Christian Era. It was in the 18th Century that we first developed a practical means of finding longitude. It was in the 18th Century that we first accurately measured the circumference of the earth. Not until the 19th Century did we begin to send out ships for the purposes of whaling or exploration into the Arctic or Antarctic Seas. The maps indicate that some ancient people may have done all these things.*

*'Mapping on such a scale as this suggests both economic motivations and economic resources. Organized government is indicated. The mapping of a continent like Antarctica implies much organization, many exploring expeditions, many stages in the compilation of local observations and local maps into a general map, all under central direction. Furthermore, it is unlikely that navigation and mapmaking were the only sciences developed by this people, or that the application of mathematics to cartography was the only practical application they made of their mathematical knowledge.*

*'Whatever its attainments may have been, however, this civilization disappeared... It's disappearance has implications we ought to consider seriously... The idea of the simple linear development of society*



**The Piri Re'is Map**

*from the culture of the Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age) through the successive stages of the Neolithic (New Stone Age), Bronze, and Iron Ages must be given up. Today we find primitive cultures co-existing with advanced modern society on all continents - the Bushmen of Australia, the Bushmen of South Africa, truly primitive peoples in South America, and in New Guinea; some tribal peoples in the United States.'* (Pages 193-194).

*'Outside the archæological field there are two areas in which there is worthwhile evidence of an ancient world civilization. There is, first, the problem of the origin of the principle families of speech and the various groups of languages. Some scholars have claimed that most languages betray evidences of an original common language, ancestral to all the groups of language... It is interesting that a tradition of a universal language seems common in ancient literature. In Genesis we read, of course, 'Now the whole earth had one language and the same words.' (Gen. 11:1). Lincoln Barnett, in his Treasures of Our Tongue, remarks, 'The notion that at*

*one time all men spoke a single language is by no means unique to Genesis. It found expression in ancient Egypt, in early Hindu and Buddhist writings and was seriously explored by several European philosophers during the 16th Century...' (24:46).*

*'The other line of research is comparable mythology. [My studies reveal] the virtual identity of the great systems of mythology throughout the world. The same patterns, the same principle deities, appear everywhere - in Europe, in Asia, in North and South America, in Oceania...*

*'The evidence for an ancient worldwide civilization, or a civilization that for a considerable time must have dominated much of the world in a very remote period, is rather plentiful - at least potentially.'* (Pages 204-206).

'Eureka!'

### The Post-Flood/Pre-Babel Civilization

I had not at all anticipated that when I bought the book. Hapgood describes some of the amazing scientific, astronomical, nautical and mathematical, achievements of an

ancient, unknown civilization, which was probably localised in one area but which dominated the world before the Ice Age (he's an evolutionist so takes no account of the Flood or biblical dating), had a common language and which died out suddenly, leaving only few traces behind. Biblically what are we talking about? Who were these people? Where did they come from and what caused their demise?

Just a few verses in the Bible describe Babel. The people involved were the immediate post-Flood descendents of Noah who indeed were located more-or-less in one area and spoke one language. They were not primitive at all. What was God worried about? *'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.'* (Gen 11:6, emphasis added).

It's not much but God was worried that this people were so advanced that they could do almost anything they wanted to. They had also developed ungodly beliefs and attitudes which must have included worshipping false deities; Terah, Abram's father, we know worshipped other gods. We learn this in Joshua 24:2. God cut this people off in an instant, though He killed none of them for their wrong attitudes and practices on this occasion, but the access to their knowledge afterwards was fragmented. Some groups got astronomical knowledge, others mathematical, others literary, and some – poor devils – got nothing much and had to become hunter gatherers living in caves and using stone tools.

I'd never thought of the immediate post-Flood people being all that sophisticated and advanced but it all makes sense when you think about it. The antediluvian world was not primitive. It was one which had been imbued with knowledge from God Himself. Hapgood had no idea where 'his' civilization got their knowledge and how they became so advanced. He is not a believer in God's account of the world in the Bible. Knowledge has to be taught and the only source for such learning is that it came by revelation from God. Noah could build an Ark. God would have empowered him, and his lads: Shem, Ham, and Japheth, with the knowledge and skills necessary to do so. He did it later with the Israelites when He wanted the tabernacle constructed (Ex. 35:30-36:2). There was writing before the Flood and Noah no doubt took books of learning into the Ark, indeed there is a legend - and that's all it is - that Ham stole them after the Flood, but the First Century Jews had no problem believing that Noah had a collection of learned books on board with him.

#### Noah's and Shem's influence

Don't forget that Noah was still alive when Abraham was born, and Shem outlived

him. Noah lived for 349 years after the Flood. What was he doing? Sitting in his rocking chair saying, "I've done my bit. Now it's up to you." No, he would certainly have been a king/priest, like Melchizedek (whom I believe was indeed Shem - see *Genesis Accepted* Numbers 1 and 3), but he would also have been a teaching source for the skills necessary, passing on his accumulated knowledge, which went back to Adam through his granddad Methuselah, to others. And so would his lads. These people had amazing knowledge and skills from before the Flood available to them, AND they spoke one language.

When God recommissioned Noah's family after the Flood He told them to *'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth'* (Gen. 9:1). Hapgood was wrong when he surmised that this civilization 'either was localized in one area but had worldwide commerce, or was, in a real sense, a *worldwide culture*'. He was right in that it was *localized in one area* but not that it was commerce which drove it to seek out and map the lands of the world. The world they left had been totally shattered and the one they stepped out on to was completely different and unknown to them. Discovering what this new world was like was a priority and a necessary part of their willingness to comply with God's command to 'fill the earth'. They needed to know just what was there and available so they went out on voyages of discovery, mapping the lands as they went and, yes, these maps included Antarctica before the ice, as well as America (North and South). No doubt they had to reconnoitre lands for sources of mineral wealth too. A society which knew how to make bronze (Gen. 4:22) – a skill they surely would have to have been taught by revelation – would have to know where the supplies of copper and tin were to be found. I cannot comprehend how anybody could discover that mixing copper and tin produces bronze, unless they were taught it by revelation.

That these people got sluggish about actually moving out and filling the Earth, as they had been commanded to, and stayed too long in their one area, is not in doubt. But they did not spread out after Babel in complete ignorance of where they were going and what was there. They'd mapped it all at least in terms of the coastlines. They knew exactly where they were going. They could even have taken copies of their maps with them but many of these were lost in the well-documented destructions of the ancient libraries which wiped out, at a stroke, much of the accumulated learning of the past.

#### My 'Eureka Moment'

That was my 'Eureka Moment'. For the first time in my life recently I glimpsed a very different picture of life between the Flood and Babel and how advanced it nat-

urally had to be. It's obvious when you think about it but I'd never thought about it constructively. These people were not primitives. How long would it take to lose much of this knowledge? Try a few days! If the Lord were to do the same today and I was cut off from, say, computers and silicon chips, electricity supplies, etc., I'd not be able to recreate them. I couldn't begin to build an internal combustion engine and the like. In fact I'd be pretty helpless. I'd know about these things but couldn't reproduce them so, in my new grouping by language, if nobody had these skills and this knowledge, they'd disappear almost overnight and we'd have to start again. No groups would have all the skills. The ones which were lucky and had the mathematicians and astronomers tended to do better than the ones which lost them. Thus the Egyptian and Babylonian cultures, for example, got a head start and did much better than their contemporaries.

I'd frequently wondered why God had been concerned about the fact which He recognized that *'nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.'* I just hadn't realized that this was an amazingly advanced civilization which sprang up immediately after the Flood and that it probably wasn't equalled in many areas of life until the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, though some of its inventions, knowledge or tools have never been discovered to this day. There are still many mysteries in the world but, if we keep a sharp, biblical eye on things, we can make sense of much of it.

#### Conclusion

Why didn't Moses tell us all of this? His agenda, under inspiration from God, was to move the story along so that he could get to Abraham and his faith, and the development of the story of grace leading up to Christ. There are just a few hints about these other things but once we can probe and see them, and possibly fathom them, we can derive a wonderful picture of the world, how it developed and something more about the astonishing lives of some of these people. Such knowledge makes me appreciate our God, the Bible and its story even more and I'm very grateful for these insights. They deepen faith considerably. They did for me and I hope they will do so for you too.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure of 104 years is based on other studies I have conducted elsewhere into the cyclical nature of celestial catastrophes which affected the Earth, and hence affected people in Bible lands and Bible times, in the past. The figures were developed for a study on 'The Problem of Judges', which is chapter 7 in my book, *Speak Through The Earthquake, Wind And Fire*, Countyvise, 1982. I found that the Velikovskian 52 year cycle was much better than the 54 year cycle proposed by Donald W. Patten. I believe the Ice fell at the end of the second 52-year cycle.



# Rachel's Gods

I'm bothered about Rachel's gods, or rather they were Laban's gods which Rachel stole when the family ran away from Laban's clutches to go back to Canaan (Genesis 31:19ff). Why did she want them? How come Laban had them anyway? Weren't they supposed to be part of the godly line which honoured Jehovah as the One God, and that's why Abraham sent to his brother's household to find a wife for his son, Isaac? It's all very odd and seems to be quite inconsistent with our perception of the biblical people of the time.

Rachel, it appears, though married to Jacob and one of the mothers of the twelve tribes of Israel, was still, in part at least, an idolater. She may well have believed in God but she still clung to local superstitions and didn't want to lose complete touch with them. Whilst I wish it were otherwise, I have no problem with believing this to be the case. The greatest of the biblical worthies were never perfect – Jesus excepted, of course – and their imperfections took various forms.

## Clinging on to idols

Rachel apparently still wanted to cling on to idolatrous superstitions, and maybe many of us today can empathize with her. I mean, we don't have idols, little mini images we treasure, or practices which betoken an idolatrous interest in the supernatural, do we? Christians never look at their horoscopes and half believe in them, do they? Princess Diana consulted a psychic just a few



days before she died, who conveniently failed to 'see' her death in Paris those few

days later in 1997 and warn her not to go. Nancy Reagan, wife of President Ronald Reagan and America's First Lady for eight years, used to go to similar people for guidance. And of course, we never touch wood or refuse to walk under ladders and nobody wears medallions and charm bracelets for luck in these Christian days. Crucifixes around the neck and St Christopher medallions to protect while travelling are not part of our sophisticated, Christian, 21<sup>st</sup> Century, are they? No, with tarot cards, horoscopes, reading crystals, wearing charms for luck, and so on, our society is as full of idolatry as it ever was, especially when you throw in the large so-called Christian denominations having idols and icons littered all around their places of worship.

## Jacob's complicity

So it's not surprising that sometimes even the faithful are sucked into some of it. Rachel was certainly not strange in her desire to keep some of the family gods. One thing is for certain, Jacob had lived with her family for 20 years and he had obviously not raised any issues over them, nor taught her that such things were not part of true worship and should play no part in her life. It was to be after the family landed in Canaan, at Shechem, that Jacob was to give the lead to his family in this regard. In Genesis 35:1-4 we read:

*'God said to Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau.' So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone.' So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree that was near Shechem.'*

Foreign gods, though not part of Jacob's beliefs, were a positive fact in his household and he tolerated them until this time. Even the greatest of patriarchs and leaders fell down in their duty at times, though they didn't necessarily fall into that



**Rachel hides the idols.**

(Venetian painter Tiespolo (1696-1770))

specific form of sin themselves. Strong teaching is necessary and, if not given, can open the door for spiritual deviation – a point we will return to later on.

## Excuses for Rachel

But if Rachel's gods bother me, I was equally bothered by some commentators' attempts to excuse her and slot her action into a preconceived notion that all in the godly line of the story wouldn't ever make a slip-up like this. Just consider some of their 'solutions': *'Theodoret... calls them idols, and says that Rachel, who was a type of the true Church, stole them from her father that he might be delivered from idolatry.'* R.S. Jarchi says more-or-less the same thing. Matthew Henry suggested a variation on this in that she did it *'out of a design hereby to convince her father of the folly of his regard to those as gods which could not secure themselves.'* This is the noble motive, but in my opinion it's a complete fudge.

## Let's stop fudging

Others thought she stole them not for herself, but because she was afraid that Laban might consult them and discover where they had fled to. This too is a fudge, especially when we realise that this last explanation does nothing for her credibility because, whether she wanted them for herself or not, she certainly believed in their powers. Anyway, with or without them, Laban still found out where they had gone and caught up with them. If that was her motive, it was a pointless exercise. So, how about: 'She stole them for herself because she believed in them and wanted them near to her as, being more than a little frightened at the prospects she faced in the future, she left home for ever to go to a strange land and live amongst strange people.' The poor girl was probably petrified and wanted their comforting presence.

## The problem of the gods

Whatever the motives were for Rachel taking her father's gods - or implements for

divination as they might well have been - we are still left with the problem of the gods being in this household in the first place. It is true that this family was in the direct genealogical line from Shem down to Abraham and beyond into the Jewish nation, which was God's chosen people. They may not have been perfect, and they weren't, but there were to be many fine, godly, God-fearing, righteous men and women who were a blessing to the Name of God, to be born into it, including the Saviour of the whole world. This was a very special nation in the making. We might like to criticize them at times but we should always be prepared to honour them for the part they played in our salvation. However, why did they have any of these gods in the first place?

### Jacob and Rachel's ancestry

Let's back up a little along the line to Jacob's great-granddad, and Rachel's great-great-granddad, Terah. He was Abraham's dad and had two other sons, Nahor and Haran. (Haran had a son, Lot, but he, Haran, died so Abraham took Lot under his wing.) Nahor fathered Bethuel who then fathered Rebecca (Isaac's wife) and Laban. Terah took his family, including Abraham and Sarah, from Ur of the Chaldees, where they lived, to go to the city of Haran. It appears that both cities were tied by commerce, and by dedication, to the god Nanna (known in Ur as Nannar), or Sin, who was a Babylonian moon-god. In both cities idolatry was rife - it



**Nannar with the 'three muses' and Eternally Fruiting Orb - Ur-Nammu**

(This god was also known as Allah! Muslims do not worship Jehovah under another name.)

wasn't a move designed to escape from idolatry - and Terah, for some reason, joined in. We don't get this from Genesis but rather from Joshua, where we read, *'Joshua said to all the people, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.'* (Josh 24:2). Later in this famous speech to the people he reiterated this notion: *'Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for*

*me and my house, we will serve the LORD.'* (Josh 24:14-15). The people agreed to do as Joshua told them to, and they remained faithful for many years thereafter.

It was known amongst the faithful Jews that their forefathers, who lived in Babylon beyond the Euphrates in Ur of the Chaldees, had served other gods whilst, no doubt, in their own tin-pot way worshipping Jehovah as well. They were corrupted by the influences of the people where they dwelt. But what was the district where Ur was located? It was in the Plain of Shinar. And what had happened there? This is where the tower of Babel was built. A picture is now emerging.

### God's amazing thoughts immediately after the Flood

I sometimes cast my mind back to the end of the Flood. Noah and his family have not long stepped out of the Ark on to this strange new world they were to inhabit and repopulate. For over a year they had been inside the Ark while millions of people and animals had drowned. Before the Flood God had regretted that He had made mankind and was almost ready to finish off the lot of them. However, He decided to preserve this one family because one man was righteous and deserved to live. After all of this, and with a fresh start beginning to happen, what is the very first thing God says? *'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). Amazing! He's just gone to all of that trouble and He realizes that it was largely a futile exercise because 'the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth'. He looked at Noah, the lads and their women-folk, and knew that before too long it would all start to go wrong again because that's how we humans are, and always will be, thanks to Adam's sin. Our natures will tend towards evil no matter how 'righteous' we are, even the very best of us - and Noah was one of the very best.

### Our fallen nature and problems of faithfulness

And this is the story of godly people down the years. Adam and Eve's first two sons must have received the same upbringing, the same teaching and training, the same lessons in loving and serving God. One was Cain and the other was Abel! You look around at people you know in the churches, or have known in the churches over the years - they gave the same lessons and upbringing to all of their children but frequently some are faithful and others rebel, wandering away from what they have been taught. This is not just a problem with - for want of a better word - the 'ordinary' members; it happens just as readily to eminent church leaders. In the scriptures we can easily recall the wayward children of both Eli and Samuel. I point no

fingers because my two children have not yet lived out their faith to the end.

### Faithfulness in Noah's family

Faithfulness is a lifetime of effort and application. Having godly parents is a great help along the road to righteousness but it offers no absolute guarantees. Noah had three sons. Looking at their genealogies in Genesis 10, we can easily see which one did not do a good job of passing on the faith to his children. Ham's genealogy is a classic of waywardness amongst his descendents (we looked at this previously in *Genesis Accepted* Number 10, 'Giants'). That actually tells us nothing about Ham's personal salvation but it does tell us that he failed to give godly guidance to his children when they needed it. It could be that he was rebellious himself and didn't bother because he didn't care. Equally it could be that he was a come-day-go-day sort of a man who merely wanted a peaceful life and couldn't be bothered to make the effort and set the example when it mattered.

We said earlier that we would return to this point because it needs stressing. If we fail in our duty and don't give strong teaching, don't give a good spiritual example, don't by our actions teach loyalty, godly priorities and faithfulness in our service for the Lord, we mustn't be surprised if our children don't share our faith and subsequently drift away from the church and serving God, until they are subsumed into the standards and beliefs of the society in which they are located, to one degree or another. Faithfulness towards God is taught; it's not genetic and doesn't come naturally.

### Thoughts about why the sudden drift into idolatry

I believe that there were reasons for the rapid drift into idolatry after the awesome, purifying effects of the Flood. To grasp it we have to comprehend a world where an astro-catastrophe had destroyed it by Flood and that the natural 'agent' of its destruction was still very much in evidence in the skies. It is true that God had made a promise never to destroy the world again by a Flood but He did not say that the world would roll along in peace and tranquillity thereafter. There were real threats from the heavens in those days and these seemed to continue down to Isaiah's time *circa* 750BC.<sup>1</sup> Whilst it was not simply the same 'agent' each time, we need to appreciate exactly why our early ancestors were obsessed with star-gazing. This was not just a hobby for a few of their elite intellectuals. Rogue heavenly bodies were an ever-present threat to everybody, and many man-hours were expended on building observatories, like Stonehenge, to study them. Men who knew the maths to make accurate predictions about these threats soon became a priestly class and jealously guarded their secrets to preserve their status. Looking at the dangers from the heavens where there were things you could



**Stonehenge: an ancient astral observatory**

not control threatening your very existence, it is not too difficult to appreciate that gods you could see, and felt the need to appease, were easier to worship than a God you could not see. It took great faith to remain faithful to Jehovah.

#### **From Shinar to Canaan**

It wasn't too long before we see the rebellion at Babel and the drastic action God had to take there. It was probably Nimrod who engineered this rebellion (see *Genesis Accepted*, Number 7). The Bible gives us no reason as to why this particular branch of the Semites (call them Shemites if you will) settled in Ur after Babel and stayed there until Terah moved them all, possibly under Abraham's influence due to God's prompting, but they found themselves surrounded by idolatry and it affected them. Terah worshipped gods and his lads must have come under that influence, though Terah seems also to have taught about Jehovah as well for one son at least turned his back on these idols and yearned to serve the true and living God faithfully. God was preparing His people to be the means of faithful witness until the Saviour was to come. So Abraham was plucked away from it and moved, if somewhat slowly by our standards, down into Canaan, later to be the Promised Land. Terah must have taught his family quite well about the true God because Abraham was confident that he could find a wife for Isaac amongst his own people, and it was the spiritual dimension he was looking for in her. There is no hint that Rebekah had any inclination to worship gods but her brother may well have been the rebel who did. He certainly wasn't a decent and honourable man by the way he treated Jacob, and his two daugh-

ters. As the son and heir, Laban probably inherited the family gods from his dad and granddad, hence his upset when he found them missing.

Jacob had no interest in these gods. His indignation at the very suggestion by Laban that he had stolen them shows this. But there is a sad sequel to the story. You see in order to

demonstrate his innocence he, big mouth, went far too far in his protestations, a bit like poor old Jephthah later on in Judges. *'Anyone with whom you find your gods,'* he said, *'shall not live.'* (Gen. 31:32). He didn't know that his beloved Rachel had them, and that there might well be a price to pay for that careless oath. Like Jephthah, he meant it. It was not too long afterwards that she was to die in childbirth. There's no link made in the scriptures but was that just a sad coincidence once the necessity of producing the final son to create the twelve tribes had occurred? Did God honour Jacob's oath, or not? You make up your own mind.

#### **Lessons for us today**

The story of Rachel's gods is multifaceted. There is so much going on in the background and it is fascinating to study about it. When I first looked into it, I went off into all sorts of tangents, all which have not necessarily surfaced fully, though most should do so in future issues of the magazine! I really enjoyed the digging and doing this study.

But you know, one tangent I did consider was what about other gods in our lives today? We don't have them, do we? Well, not little idols we carry around and use as magic totems, or divination tools (as some suggested that these actually were from the word study surrounding the word translated 'gods' - *teraphim*). But do we have idolatrous influences in our lives. In Jacob's day they were actual religious objects and could easily be identified as idols but today they are more subtle. You see, if we allow things to influence us and

turn us away from serving the true and living God, it could well be a form of idolatry. Today's subtlety is that the things which do this to us are not evil in themselves but are morally and spiritually neutral. We potentially have one in our living room. It can dominate our lives and deflect us from full service for God if we let it. We call it a television set. Television sets over the years have done more damage to the Gospel than we realize. They've virtually killed off Sunday evening services and decimated Sunday Schools. You may not realize it but if you'd lived through the 60s and seen how 'clever' programming affected Sunday evening Gospel services all over the country, you'd see what I mean. The programme which encapsulated it was the 'Forsythe Saga' in 1967. Churches throughout the land had to re-schedule meeting times to accommodate it and this influence carried on until today we don't even notice it happened. Admittedly the introduction of the video recorder redressed the balance somewhat but the damage had been done. Gospel meetings and week-long evening campaign meetings couldn't compete with the one-eyed idol in people's living rooms. I could go on to suggest other things which have done things like this to undermine our service to the Lord in subtle ways but that makes the point I wanted to make.

Like Terah and his family, we are sometimes drawn into the things which are part of our society. It can be very hard to resist and not let them corrupt us. We might feel he was weak without realizing that we share his weaknesses and do the same sorts of things, having no true high spiritual ground to stand on in judgement of him and his family. They were the ones who loved God at heart but they were not perfect. Nevertheless God was able to use this family mightily in His Plan to save mankind. There are so many lessons to be learned from studying these people. They still preach to me and I pray that they will say something valuable to you. But I hope you can see why right at the beginning I was bothered by Rachel's gods.

<sup>1</sup> This is developed thoroughly in my book, *Speak Through The Earthquake, Wind And Fire*, Countywise, 1982.

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