

RE-WRITING BIBLICAL HISTORY

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Not too long a go... I watched a television presentation on the History Channel *. The episode was exploring Noah and the Flood. Over the next hour it explored the possibilities of an actual flood event that would cover all landscapes around the world and concluded that such an event would be unlikely. Then it proceeded to reveal an excerpt of an ancient writing from the Sumerian Civilization about a flood event that devastated the local landscape during their time. They began to hypothesize that the Flood was not a world wide event, but a local event experienced in Palestine. In their conclusion, Noah and his family were Sumerians and in the shipping business. What probably happened was he had just loaded his boat with a shipment when a freak storm occurred. In order to salvage the vessel, Noah and his family casted off and went out to sea. The local flood event occurred in which Noah and his family was pushed out into the ocean. With no land in sight and no idea what direction to go they sailed for days. Living on the provision of their cargo until one day a bird came indicating they were close to land. Having used up all the cargo they were supposed to deliver, Noah and his family did not return home, but started over in exile as would have been demanded by the law and custom of that day. They determined that the Israelites, at the time of Solomon, heard of this story and immediately recognized the moral usage of such a story. They embellished it to a world wide event and incorporated it into their holy scriptures.

Just recently, I watched a 2 part television series on the National Geographic Channel*. These episodes were exploring the 10 plagues of Egypt during the Exodus. In the very beginning of the episode they make the statement that there are no historical records of the Israelites or the plagues of devastation defined in the Bible. They determined that the city that is referenced in Exodus was not a metropolis during the Pharaoh that best matches the events of the day. They determined that the Israelites, at the time of Solomon, were remembering back to the devastating natural disasters that occurred over a period of a hundred years that lead to their migration, as a people, out of Egypt. They determined that the first six plagues were an environmental phenomenon that occurred due to that stretch of the Nile closing up. These events lead to the abandonment of the major metropolis city that is farmland today. What is interesting is that they referenced Egyptian documents of the natural disasters as proof to their theory in abandoning the city. The last 4 plagues were due to the eruption of a volcano from an island off the coast of Egypt at the time of Ramses II.

At first glance these stories woo us with their facts, images and illustrations. Honestly, their hypothesis seems fair and probable, but when you stop to ponder the events they portray holes begin to develop. For example, if Noah was a Sumerian Captain that got pushed out to sea, how does this explain the 35 cultures and religions around the world that believe there was at one time a world wide flood that killed all life? How does this explain the Sumerian Epic, Gilgamesh, which contains a story of a world wide flood that matches the other accounts of a flood? How does this explain the archaeological evidence of a civilization prior to the flood, for example the tablet of Pre-divilun kings? Where does the seashells and sea life fossils come from that have been excavated at the top of mountains that indicate they were once a seabed? If the Israelites did find a morality lesson within the Sumerian's story, what bases would they have to

say this was their heritage and their story? With the important emphasis that has always been placed on lineage and who their descendants were, why would they not already have listed this in their lineage and say that the Israelites came from an outlaw that nearly died at sea?

Consider the Egyptian story; there are no Egyptian documents of the Israelites being slaves or set free. Yet, within their own broadcast they reference an Egyptian document to make their case. Why would the Egyptians document such atrocities? Why would they document their god, Pharaoh, was punished and died because he did not submit to the demands of a foreign god? Remember, this is the same people that made every attempt to blot out from their history a period of Canaanite rulers over Egypt known as the Hyksos. Would they not do the same for a slave people, Israelites? How do these plagues over a hundred years answer the hundreds of archeological finds in the Red Sea of chariots and Egyptian armament? How would this explain the pillars that were erected to memorialize Israel's crossing?

What we are seeing today, is a phenomena in scholastic society. Scientific and Historical Scholars have come to the mind set that a belief in a supernatural deity is not logical but superstitious. The educated have grown in their wisdom that all things can be explained if studied enough, and there is no such thing as God. When in fact, you can make anything say what you want to believe if you ignore enough of the facts that do not support your belief. As man's understanding of the laws of the universe grow, he is forced to explain moments of history that seem supernatural. He is forced to explain and/or re-write a history without superstition and without God. The ironic thing is the scholastic community is so desperate to devoid itself of religion that it has become illogical in itself.

Biblical scholars have had to defend the information presented in the Bible for hundreds of years. They have had to defend every "*jot and tittle*" of the Bible to the Scholastic community. However, the Scholastic community will receive any archaeological or historical interpretation with open arms if it fits within their predetermined idea of mankind. Consider, for example, the published archeological find amongst the Scholastic community, *Ardie*. Ardie is a skull that was found which happens to look like a cross between a monkey and a human's skull. According to the approved carbon dating method (which its basis of theory is flawed**) it dates to a time period that fits within their predetermined evolution of mankind. Ardie was published in Time Magazine, USA Today and the Smithsonian Magazine. They even created bronze statues of what man looked like according to the bone fragments found with Ardie. With all the hype that Ardie receives the average person assumes it is creditable and here is another niche in evolution theory.

Consider what they are saying Ardie represents, if I found a skittles bag in my front yard and there was one purple skittle left in it, then I said that for the last 50 years mankind made candy called skittles and they were all purple. No one would believe it and I would be ridiculed for making such a statement. Yet this is what the scientific community has done. They have found one skull bone and have determined that mankind for 100 thousand years, on a timeline between 6 and 5 million BCE, looked like this and the Scholastic community has no problems with this. That is like saying, today every person on the earth looks like me. This violates every mathematical and scientific principle known to man today and it is completely illogical.

Bible believers today can have their faith shaken by poorly interpreted historical events and archaeological finds, because they are presented so well and with authority. However, we must remember to hang on to the fact the Bible has been consistently proven throughout the ages. More archaeological evidence is found each year strengthening the validity of the Bible than what is presented to the public. We may not always be able to explain things that are written, but given enough time the answer will present itself. Remember God does not need us to defend Him, He is much more capable of handling this. Consider one final thing; the Scholastic community was ready to throw out the Bible as a fictional tale, because Isaiah references an Assyrian king named Sargon. There was no archaeological evidence or historical document that ever identified such a person to exist much less rule the Assyrian Empire. Many in the Scholastic community had convinced themselves that this was a biblical error. Until 1842, Archaeologist uncovered the palace of Sargon at the Northern edge of Nineveh, the capital city for Assyria. The name that had been lost for 2500 years and the palace was forgotten; the Bible was the only evidence that they had existed and it was RIGHT!

*This article is the author's paraphrase or interpretation of the episodes described and should not reflect upon History Channel or National Geographic Channel. Interested parties should view the episodes for themselves prior to any speculation.

** Whether you use good logic or the scientific method taught in Junior High School the carbon 14 dating method has one glaring flaw. That flaw is the assumption that the environmental conditions today are the same as when the object is dated. Whether you believe in the world wide flood, or a meteorite that wiped out the dinosaur or an ice age, we cannot prove that the environment is the same. Without knowing the conditions of the environment prior to that global event, you cannot determine the dating method still works. Assuming they are the same or close enough is poor science. Therefore, Bible believers can't date anything beyond the flood and must rely on written record alone.