

GLEANINGS — March 1, A.D. 2015  
Who Is To Blame?

Psalm 119:130 reads, "The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." Who extinguished the light of divine knowledge in America, leaving us a nation groping in the dark, confused and bewildered? Who allowed this people to sink into such profound depths of moral depravity?

A comedian of bygone years had a one line, catch-all excuse for his sins and foibles: "The devil made me do it!" Wrong answer. The devil's due is very little. The lion's share of responsibility for our decline is upon other shoulders. We Christians, especially those of us who are teachers in the Church (parents, pastors, college and seminary professors, et. al.) do not have to look beyond the mirror to find the chief culprits.

Recently this blogger heard a professional engineer, a devout disciple of Jesus, tell of an encounter he had with a peer who expressed utter astonishment that the Christian engineer "believed in the ark" (of Noah).

Let's think about that. What was likely the unbeliever's mental picture of Noah's ark, and where did he get it? Was he astonished at his friend's faith because he thought of a small tug boat style vessel, bursting at the seams with cartoon animals (giraffe neck and head protruding), and an old man with a beard on deck?

And did he imagine Noah on safari, hunting down animals for the ark? Did he know of the dual source of the water that caused the never to be repeated flood (Genesis 7:11)? Or did his jaw go slack at the thought that his friend believed in a thunderstorm capable of inundating the whole earth? What other faulty conceptualizations did he hold concerning that global, divinely orchestrated cataclysm, and its purpose?

Was holy Scripture related to him as a "story" or a moralistic fable? Did Christian teachers present this foundational Biblical narrative as a myth or fairy tale, instead of as God's mightiest temporal judgment to date, and history's greatest catastrophe – an event of crucial importance to understanding God's righteous nature, His covenant purposes, and what we observe in today's world and its inhabitants?

Per Genesis 6:14-16, the Biblical ark was a huge, rectangular, roofed vessel with three decks – all designed by God. Noah didn't capture the animals, their Creator brought them to Noah (verse 20). Animal kinds are not identical with the millions of "species" categorized by modern taxonomy. In the case of larger animals, God likely sent specimens that were younger, hence smaller and more fit for future procreation.

Even admitting that last statement to be speculative (none of us were there!), it stands that from the small shrew and the little lizard up to the monstrous mammoth and the amazing apatosaurus (*yes, dinos were on the ark!*), the median size of an ark animal was equivalent to that of a sheep. In short, there is nothing about the Great Flood narrative constraining us to assign it to the realm of myth or even godly parable. It is history, and some record of it has been preserved by virtually all the nations of the world.

The point is, we who Christ declared to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth have let our lamps go out. We have lost our saltiness. In the case of Genesis 6 - 9 and other passages, we allowed unbelief to twist the truth and brainwash our neighbors with error. Many of our young have not been well equipped with a pervasive, thorough, and comprehensive Biblical world view, nor given the skills to defend their faith in any vocation. Instead their minds have been formed by those who deem that faith – and all of God's law, testimonies, precepts, and judgments – to be irrelevant, archaic, and absurd.

"For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water." (2 Peter 3:5,6)