

Was the Genesis Flood Local?

Some Christians believe the earth is 4.5 billion years old and that the flood described in the book of Genesis (chapters 6-9) was a local event limited to the area where Noah lived (i.e. the Mesopotamian Valley region). Why? Primarily because of their perspectives on the fossil record and radiometric dating. They believe the fossil record was laid down over millions of years and know that a global flood would have disturbed the fossils. Yet, there is significant evidence that most of the fossil record was *created* by the Genesis Flood! By tracing genealogies in the Bible, we know the Flood occurred around 4,500 years ago. Let's take a look at eight reasons for believing the Genesis Flood was a global, catastrophic event.

1. Massive geologic layers: the Genesis Flood laid down millions of cubic feet of sediment (i.e. mud) all over the globe which hardened into rock. These layers contain most of the fossil record and are often similar in composition. Some of these massive layers, such as the Kaibab Upwarp in the Grand Canyon, are bent into steep curves, proving they were laid down rapidly and then bent before hardening into rock.
2. Fossil record: the fossil record is world-wide and shows evidence of **rapid burial**. Specific examples include clam and oyster shells on mountain tops that were fossilized in the **closed** position, fish buried in the process of eating other fish, and even fish that were buried while giving birth.
3. The Flood covered the highest mountains: Scripture says that the "waters rose and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. They rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered. The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than fifteen cubits." (Genesis 7:18-20, emphasis added). Since water seeks its own level, it would be impossible for the water to cover the highest mountains and still be only a local event.
4. Purpose of the Flood: due to widespread problems caused by sin, God decided to wipe out **all** of mankind, the land dwelling animals and birds (except for those who were on the Ark). God said the earth "was corrupt and filled with



Over 500 giant fossilized oysters were found in the tops of the Andes Mountains, two miles above sea level! The oysters were fossilized in the closed position indicating they were rapidly buried while they were still alive.

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violence" (Genesis 6:11-12), and that He was going to "bring floodwaters to destroy every creature on the face of the earth that has the breath of life in it" (Genesis 6:17). He also specifically mentioned people multiple times: "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created" (Genesis 6:7). Since it is highly improbable that all of the people on earth lived in the Mesopotamian Valley region, a local flood would not have accomplished God's purpose.

5. Use of the words "all" and "every" and "everything" in Genesis chapters 6-9: The words "all," "every" and "everything" are used 66 times in the Genesis Flood account. Many of these verses describe the creatures and people that perished during the flood. It is very clear by the context of these passages that God meant He was going to destroy all living creatures that live on land (except for those on the Ark). For example:

"Every living thing that moved on land perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; people and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark."
Genesis 7:21-23 (emphasis added)

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6. The Ark: it took Noah and his family a long time to build the Ark. If the Flood was just a local event, why would God tell Noah to build a ship over 400 feet long (Genesis 6:15) and then bring on board all of the different kinds of animals including birds to be saved? (Genesis 6:19-21). If the flood was only a local event, there would be no need for an ark—Noah and the animals that God wanted to save would have had plenty of time to travel to a safer area.
7. God's covenant: in Genesis 9:11, God made a promise, "Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." This promise doesn't make any sense if the flood was local.
8. Jesus believed in a global flood: "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all." Luke 17:26-27

Recommended Resources:

- [Old Earth Creationism on Trial](#), Tim Chaffey and Jason Lisle
- [The Global Flood; Unlocking Earth's Geologic History](#), John D. Morris
- [The Fossil Record; Unearthing Nature's History of Life](#), John D. Morris
- [The New Answers Book 3](#), Andrew Snelling and Ken Ham. Available: <https://answersingenesis.org/the-flood/global/was-the-flood-of-noah-global-or-local-in-extent/>