

And the Earth Swallowed the Flood

Description

A study related to the SDA
Sabbath School Lesson for 2021, 2nd Quarter
The Promise: God's Everlasting Covenant
Week 3
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This week's lesson is entitled, "All Future Generations," and discusses the covenant God made with Noah, his family, and humanity before and after the flood. Before the flood, God established a covenant of protection for Noah and his family, to board the ark a place of safety from the coming destruction.

Thursday's lesson is entitled, "Only Noah Was Left," and discusses the concept of "the remnant" found not only here, but throughout scripture.

Today we are going to discuss these two topics as they relate to present truth, that is the ark of safety for today, and the last remnant church ever to exist—and, spoiler alert, the last remnant church is not the SDA church in its current state as many today think.

So, let's start where Thursday's lesson starts, with the ark of safety and remnant church of Noah's day. Genesis 7:23 reads,

He [God] blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. Genesis 7:23

The Sabbath School lesson then says,

In this text one finds the first mention of the concept of "the remnant" in the Scriptures. The word translated as "was left" comes from another word whose root forms are used many times in the Old Testament where the idea of a remnant is conveyed. Sabbath School Quarterly Lesson, Thursday, April 15, 2021

The lesson then gives a number of other scriptures concerning "remnants" throughout the history of God's people.

In Genesis 45:7, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers who were looking for protection in Egypt from the destroying famine in Canaan. Joseph said,

“God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.” Genesis 45:7

Here we again see both a remnant of posterity and a place of safety, an ark, so to speak, in the land of Egypt.

Then, the lesson cites the remnant in Isaiah 4:3. In declaring Jerusalem’s glorious future, Isaiah prophesied,

And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, every one who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem. Isaiah 4:3

The lesson points out that the phrase “is left” here is similar to the word for “was left” in Genesis 7:23. This word means “remnant.”

Next, Isaiah 11:11 reads,

In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant which is left of his people. Isaiah 11:11

Isaiah 11 is a wonderful chapter that describes a place of safety, or an ark of safety, for God’s people in the last days. It is called God’s “holy mountain,” where even the lamb will dwell with the wolf in safety. This “ark of safety,” also called the “pre-millennial kingdom,” is a kingdom to come before the return of Christ, as can be determined here by God’s promise of gathering of another remnant who are outside of this holy mountain, those located in the Gentile nations that have a heart for righteousness and serving God.

This “Holy Mountain” in Isaiah is actually a remnant itself depicted in Daniel 2 as once a small stone, a remnant, that came out of a bigger mountain in the days of the toe kings.

Daniel 2:34-35 reads,

³⁴ “You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵ “And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.”

So, here we see a stone that breaks up the statue of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, striking its toes. This stone has work to do. This stone then becomes a great “holy” mountain; it grows to eventually fill the whole earth.

Continuing in verses 44 and 45 we read more about this stone. In these verses we learn that this stone is a remnant of a prior mountain. The parallelisms here in Daniel 2 inform us that the kingdom described here in verse 45 is indeed the stone of verse 34 and 35. Daniel 2:44-45 reads,

⁴⁴ “And in the days of these kings [the toe kings] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it [just like the stone of verse 34] shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand

forever.⁴⁵ Inasmuch as you saw that the stone [the remnant- the 144,000 as we will see] was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.â•

So, here we can see a separation of a remnant stone from a larger mountain. Mountains prophetically represent churches, see Daniel 9:16-20; Ezekiel 36:1-6; Isaiah 56:7; and Micah 4:1-2.

The mountain from which the stone is cut evidently represents a church — but which church? Well, since the stone is cut from the mountain in the days of the toe kings, it must be God’s church in our own day since, as all SDAs know, we are living in the days of the toe kings. Also, we should all be aware of the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist church was especially set apart by God as his denominated people. It then must be the mountain. So while we know that the SDA church is the remnant church, this prophecy indicates that there will be a remnant of the remnant — those faithful Adventists who receive the seal and who God uses to establish his kingdom.

Now let’s look at what is probably the most famous —remnant— passage — Revelation 12. As we will see, the remnant spoken of here is not the SDA church in its current state.

Revelation 12:13-17 reads,

¹³ Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *Child*. ¹⁴ But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. ¹⁵ So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. ¹⁶ But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. ¹⁷ And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

As SDAs should know, the wilderness period of time, times and half a time, prophetically denotes the period 1,260 years of the dark ages, from 538 BCE to 1798 CE, in which the woman, God’s ever-living church, was protected in the wilderness, out of the serpent’s reach. After this period of time, scripture teaches that the serpent successfully spewed water like a flood into her, hoping to overtake her and sweep her away. This plan would have worked, but God helped His church by opening the earth and swallowing the flood. The dragon then becomes enraged by this turn of events and can no longer persecute the woman, because she is obviously once again out of his reach. He then does the next best thing, which is to wage an attack on the rest of her offspring, or the remnant of her seed — who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.

Now there is a lot here, so let’s go deeper into some of the symbolism and typology it presents. First, let’s look at the symbolic meaning behind the flood.

Now, what do —waters— represent in scripture? Yes, it is multitudes of people. Revelation 17:15 reads,

¹⁵ Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues."

So here, too the flood also represents multitudes of people in this case, unconverted people (since they are sent by Satan), flooding into the church the woman. Yes, Satan's plan to destroy the church that arose after 1798 was to flood it with unconverted people. Lots of them.

Ellen White said, "In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end." AA 585.1

Therefore, we should be able to see these scenarios in Revelation 12 described elsewhere in the bible. In this case, the scheme of Satan flooding God's ever-living church with unconverted people, and secondly, we should find a type for the earth swallowing a flood of unconverted people in order to save it.

This scheme of Satan's can also be seen in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares in Matthew 13: 24-30 which reads,

²⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?" ²⁸ He said to them, "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?" ²⁹ But he said, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

Here we see the exact same scenario as presented in Revelation 12:13-17, that is, the enemy tries to destroy the kingdom of heaven by sowing tares, the unconverted, into the church. Notice that there is a separation that will occur between the wheat and the tares in this parable, done at harvest time by the reapers. Notice too there is a place of safety for the wheat, an ark, so to speak, which is in this case God's barn.

So, before the harvest, the church depicted here has wheat and tares mingled together, not unlike the church of Revelation 12:17 before the earth helps her.

Similarly, Matthew 13:47-50 reads,

⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, ⁴⁸ which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, ⁵⁰ and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

So here we again see a scenario of the church co-mingled with good fish and bad fish. But note, like all the other stories, there is a separation to take place. And again, there is a place of safety, an ark, so to speak, for the good fish the vessel in which they will be gathered into. Notice this place of safety is given to the good fish before the the furnace of fire.

Now, how about the type for the earth swallowing a flood of unconverted people in order to save it?

The type for this event can be seen in the story of Dathan and Abiram in Numbers. It reads,

²² Moses and Aaron fell facedown and cried out, "O God, the God who gives breath to all living things, will you be angry with the entire assembly when only one man sins?"

²³ Then the Lord said to Moses, ²⁴ "Say to the assembly, 'Move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram.'"

²⁵ Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. ²⁶ He warned the assembly, "Move back from the tents of these wicked men! Do not touch anything belonging to them, or you will be swept away because of all their sins."

³¹ As soon as he finished saying all this, the ground under them split apart ³² and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households. ³³ They went down alive into the realm of the dead, with everything they owned; the earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community. Numbers 16:22-26, 31-33

So, these examples should be enough to show that the woman in Revelation will be purified by the separation of the unconverted from the converted, the tares from the wheat, the bad fish from the good fish.

So who are the good fish? Who are the wheat? Who are the righteous who are left after the wicked in the church are destroyed? As we hinted at earlier, they are the 144,000. Ellen White describes this in Testimonies for the Church Vol. 3, pp. 266-267, which we recommend you read. There she describes the destruction of the wicked in the church as represented in Ezekiel 9 and makes plain that those who receive the seal and who survive the destruction are the 144,000. This is why they are called the remnant; they are those who remain after the wicked are taken away. Remember how in Daniel 2, the stone grew to become a great mountain? That is because the 144,000 are only the first fruits (Rev. 14:4) and after the church is purified their numbers are to swell due to a great multitude of new genuine converts (Rev. 7:9).

Now, we need to address the fact that here in Revelation 12, we have a case of shifting symbolism. In other words, the symbols that apply to one group at one time, later at a different time, apply to a different group. This is normal for any prophecy that covers a large period of time. The woman during the 1260 years for example, was not made up of the same people during that entire period. Obviously, there were many generations during that time and the church some people leaving and others joining. Overtime, the actual people symbolized by the woman changed. The same thing is true of the woman and the remnant before and after the earth swallows the flood. Before the earth swallows the flood, the woman represents the members of the SDA church at the time of the separation of the righteous and wicked in the church. The 144,000 are the righteous remnant left over after the destruction of the wicked. But then there is a shift, the 144,000, being those who are left, will then be the church of God just like that small stone, ready to grow. They then are the woman and the new converts to the church from that point on will be her offspring. The rest of the offspring at that point will be the great multitude. It is against them that the serpent will make war. Remember, the righteous who are left after the separation in the church are the wheat who are put into the "barn" of Matthew 13:24-30; they are the good fish put into the "vessel" of Matthew 13:47. In other words, they are put into God's latter day ark of safety, the premillennial kingdom spoken of in Isaiah 11. This will be the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. But it doesn't cover the whole earth at once. When it begins, it will just be in the promised land. This is the place from which the 144,000 are to

evangelize the world according to Revelation 14.

As Seventh-Day Adventists, we often focus on the darkness of the last days, but we forget that as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the last days. Yes, there will be darkness and persecution, but there will also be an ark of safety. Ellen White said,

“It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended.” Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, p. 16

We need to become aware of the fact that it won't just be persecution; there will also be celestial glory. Yes, the 144,000 will have their trouble, known as the time of Jacob's trouble — but the one place in the Bible that actually uses this phrase (Jeremiah 30) says that they will be saved from their trouble and returned to the promised land where there will be a kingdom or peace. After this, the great multitude will also have their time of trouble while living among the nations who will at that time be controlled by Babylon the Great. But God will call them out of Babylon into his ark of safety.

For more on these topics, please see our *Sabbath Scholl With Branch Davidians* videos: [“The Premillennial Kingdom”](#) and [“The Eighth Church”](#) and also see [“The Pre-Millennial Kingdom”](#) by [Trent Wilde](#).