

Q&A

Noah & Paul

- GROUND RULES:
 - o Try to present a Biblical perspective on the questions
 - o There may not be a clear answer...giving my perspective

PRAY

BIBLICAL CHALLENGES: Was it really two of every kind that was on the Ark? That seem unrealistic.

Genesis 6:17–22

¹⁷ Now behold, I Myself am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which there is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. ¹⁸ But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring **two of every kind into the ark**, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female. ²⁰ Of the birds according to their kind, and of the animals according to their kind, of every crawling thing of the ground according to its kind, **two of every kind will come to you to keep *them* alive.** ²¹ As for you, take for yourself some of every food that is edible, and gather *it* to yourself; and it shall be food for you and them." ²² So Noah did *these things*; according to everything that God had commanded him, so he did.

- Was it really two of every kind? **YES**
 - o How do we know? **For the Bible tells us so.**
- Hermeneutics: Our goal is to discover...What was the original author was trying to communicate to their original readers?
 - o If the author does not give us room for...
 - figurative interpretation...then not best to treat it figuratively
 - allegorical interpretation...then not best to treat it as allegory
 - o Moses represents this as a historical narrative...
 - real people...doing real things...in real time
- What if I can't make sense of it with my understanding of the world?
 - o THEN...either I'm misunderstanding the text
 - o OR...I don't understand something about our world
 - o IT CAN'T BE...God is telling us something false OR trying to fool us.
- HUMAN PROBLEM: We think we are smarter than what we are.
 - o We live in the age...of scientific reason.

- Ken Hamm vs. Bill Nye...
 - o Ken's challenge: How do we know that things have not been different in times past than they are now?
 - How do we know that the constants that we have observed over the past 150 years...have been consistent for the 6000 years before that?
 - o Science is based on observation & our ability to observe the way the world works is limited to a very small period of time.
 - o I'm not making a case that constants have changed...
 - BUT the fact that we can't know if they have should bring us some scientific humility.
- I read articles almost every week about the discoveries of the Webb space telescope...
 - o ...and how it is regularly changing our long held scientific beliefs.
 - o BEFORE that discovery...that principle was SETTLED SCIENCE.
 - o BUT science in itself is UNSETTLED and that's okay.
- As humans...we want certainty...
 - o we want to feel like we know more than what we do
 - o ...because then we feel like we might be able to control our world.
- We all need a dose of the humility that God brought Job...
 - o ...who thought he knew more than he knew more than what he knew

Job 38:4

⁴ "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding.

- o Some say...I know what happened...
 - were you there? NO, I live 6000 years after it happened.

Job 38:16

¹⁶ "Have you entered the springs of the sea, And walked in the depth of the ocean?"

- o We have only explored 5% of the ocean floor.
- o 95% is unknown to us...much of that we can't explore with our current technology.

Job 38:34

³⁴ "Can you raise your voice to the clouds, So that an abundance of water will cover you?"

- There have been trying to make clouds rain in the 1940's.
- They've been working on a technology called "cloud seeding" to increase rainfall.
- So far...they are striking out.
 - o In fact...8 states across the west have been spending millions of dollars seeding clouds...
 - o ...and have found no definitive proof that it is doing anything.

Job 38:36

³⁶ “Who has put wisdom in the innermost being, Or given understanding to the mind?”

- He created our capacity...
 - o to think
 - o to observe
 - o to do scientific research
- He is even the One who has given us the ability to question what He has clearly said.
- If you're struggling with questioning God's clearly revealed truth...read Job 38-41.
 - o ...all scientists should be required to read it at least once a year
 - o AND MAYBE we can all start our questioning with Job's response:

Job 42:3b-4

^{3b} I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I do not know. ⁴ ‘Please listen, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.’

- So...starting there...
 - o **Can we misunderstand** the text of Scripture? SURE
 - And maybe we're missing something here.
- BUT...I think it is far more likely that we question this because of a misunderstanding of our world...
 - o that science can actually help us resolve.

TWO OF EVERY KIND

- Let's start with what kinds of creatures were in the ark:

Genesis 6:20

²⁰ Of the birds according to their kind, and of the animals according to their kind, of every crawling thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every *kind* will come to you to keep *them* alive.

- o Birds
- o Land animals
- o Crawling things = reptiles
- PROBLEM: The math
 - o The ark was:
 - 525 feet long
 - 87.5 feet wide
 - 52.5 feet tall
 - = 2.4 million cubic feet
 - = 200,000 animals = 100,000 species
 - o Today = We have observed around 1 million non-marine species (estimate 8.3 million)
 - Requiring: 156 million cubic feet
 - 210 feet tall

- 351 feet wide
- 2100 feet long
- What do we do with this information?
- Macroevolution vs Microevolution
 - Macroevolution = massive changes over massive amounts of time
 - Creation of new KINDS of beings
 - Ape to Human
 - Single celled organism → to fish → to lizard
 - Has never been observed...is pretty unscientific
 - Growing number of scientist who are rejecting macroevolution.
 - i.e. Royal Society of London
 - Microevolution = small changes over small amount of time
 - We have observed...know to be true...is very scientific
 - New related species from the same KIND of animal
 - Around 18,000 new species every year
 - i.e. **dogs**
 - AKC recognized 22 new dog breeds into their competitions in the last 10 years
 - Hungarian Mudi
 - Biewer terrier
 - barbet
 - Sahara
 - Russian Toy
- Noah did not bring 2 of every SPECIES of animal we have in 2024...
 - He brought two of every KIND of animal that existed in 2348 B.C.
 - Which we know had to be something less than 100,000 KINDS of animals
 - Likely all of those species don't exist anymore
 - BUT most if not all of those KINDS still exist today

BIBLE CHALLENGES: There is a common theme, especially among religious progressives/liberals that much of what contemporary Christians believe is based on Paul's teaching rather than the teachings of Jesus.

Response?

- SUGGESTION: Paul is teaching something different than Jesus would have taught.
 - I'm not aware of any modern Christian groups that reject the teachings of Jesus...
 - ...but embrace the teaching of Paul.
- What they are suggesting...
 - Jesus' teaching is God's Word
 - Paul's teaching is NOT God's Word

- Let's start with the "contemporary Christians believe" part of this...
 - o This is an accusation...
 - That a belief in Paul's writings being Scripture is a modern thing.
 - o Just read the church fathers
 - the earliest writings from ancient church leadership
 - ...THEY UNANIMOUSLY HOLD THE TEACHING OF PAUL TO BE AUTHORITATIVE, INSPIRED SCRIPTURE.
 - o Read writings from the church down through the centuries...
 - There were heretics in the church in every generation
 - ...trying to undermine the authority of scripture
 - BUT the church down through the centuries has ALWAYS held Paul's teaching to be authoritative, inspired scripture.

#1: The apostles had the authority to teach the church on Christ's behalf.

Matthew 28:18–20

¹⁸ And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. ¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

- Jesus had spent three years building into these guys.
- NOW...you go and teach others every have taught you.
 - o How to...
 - ...live as a follower of Jesus.
 - ...pray.
 - ...lead.
 - ...forgive.
 - ...be holy in the way that Jesus is holy.
- Jesus left the apostles for the very purpose of teaching the church.
 - o All did it face to face
 - o Some did it by writing
- ALL hold the authority of Jesus Himself...
 - o because He has all authority
 - o AND He gave them this authority
- This is why the early church were committed to THEIR teaching

Acts 2:42

⁴² They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

- Why not devoting themselves to JESUS' teaching?
 - o They knew the teaching of the apostles WAS Jesus' teaching.

- AND Jesus said...when you are teaching them to follow my instructions...
 - o I am with you
- Some have said...and do say...
 - o ALL you need is the Holy Spirit
 - o Just listen to what He is telling you
 - o ...but their application of that is...if the Bible says something that doesn't feel right to you...that is the Holy Spirit telling you it is not right

John 15:26–27

²⁶ “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *namely*, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, He will testify about Me, ²⁷ and you are testifying as well, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

- Yes the Holy Spirit leads us into truth
 - o BUT the apostles also speak the truth
- In fact, John gives us a litmus test...

1 John 4:6

⁶ We are from God. The one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

- There have been many who have rejected the teaching of the Apostles over the centuries.
 - o Their rejection is a clear and obvious indication of their error.

*“In the history of the church, apostolic doctrine has always been the means by which **the Holy Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood** can be effectively distinguished. True Christianity is apostolic Christianity.”*

[Zane C. Hodges, Bible Knowledge Commentary]

#2: Paul is an apostle.

- Paul was commissioned directly by Jesus on the road to Damascus

Acts 9:15

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.

- Paul regarded himself as an apostle.

Galatians 1:1

¹ Paul, an apostle [not *sent* from men nor through human agency, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead].

- Paul ends up defending his apostolic authority many times in his letters.

- Ironically, it was a tactic of early heretics to discredit Paul's authority and inspiration, too.
- One such defense of what he was teaching others and writing to the churches in Galatia

#3: Paul considered his own writings as divinely inspired scripture.

Galatians 1:11–2:9

¹¹ For I would have you know, brothers *and sisters*, that the gospel which was preached by me is not of human invention. ¹² For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I *received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ*.

- Many in the progressive Christian movement will claim that...
 - Paul writings are helpful, but not inspired
 - ...should be read, understood, and respected...but not given authority as God's word
- C.S. Lewis – “Lord, Lunatic, Liar”

“I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

- C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

- Similar argument regarding Paul.
 - I think it is extremely foolish to claim that Paul is a good teacher who can help us in our Christian walk...but is not an inspired apostle.
 - He's either a lunatic...
 - ...because he's claiming to have received his writings as a direct revelation of Jesus Christ
 - ...and he didn't
 - ...but he's deluded enough to think that he had received it from directly communication from a dead man
 - AND no one should be listening to anything a madman is ranting about.
 - OR he's a false teacher and liar...
 - ...trying to prop his words up
 - ...& make people listen to him
 - ...by claiming apostleship & direct revelation from Christ

- like many writers in the 2nd & 3rd century were doing
- OR HE IS AN APOSTLE & RECEIVED DIRECT REVELATION FROM JESUS
 - and we should see his words and God's Word
 - study and invest ourselves in every word
 - AND allow it to transform our lives
- BUT...to claim some patronizing nonsense that he is just a great human teacher...
 - is absolutely ridiculous
 - Paul has not left that option open to us.
 - He never intended to.

#4: The apostles considered Paul an apostle.

¹³ For you have heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; ¹⁴ and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. ¹⁵ **But when** He who had set me apart *even* from my mother's womb and called *me* through His grace was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

- He's making a case for the fact that the truth of the gospel of reveal to him directly by Christ...
 - He didn't learn it from any other person

¹⁸ Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas [Apostle Peter], and stayed with him for fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I did not see another one of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰ [Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.] ²¹ **Then I went** into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² I was *still* unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which are in Christ; ²³ but they only kept hearing, "The man who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy." ²⁴ And they were glorifying God because of me.

²¹ **Then after** an interval of fourteen years...

- This is well into his ministry
 - converted in 35 A.D.
 - so this would have been in 49 A.D.
 - between his 1st & 2nd missionary journeys

...I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. ² It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but *I did so* in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that somehow I might be running, or had run, in vain. ³ But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. ⁴ **Yet it was** a *concern* because of the false brothers secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy on our freedom which we have in

Christ Jesus, in order to enslave us. ⁵ But we did not yield in subjection to them, even for an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you. ⁶ **But from** those who were of considerable repute [what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no favoritism]—well, those who were of repute contributed nothing to me. ⁷ But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter *had been* to the circumcised ⁸ (**for He who** was at work for Peter in *his* apostleship to the circumcised was at work for me also to the Gentiles), ⁹ and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we *might go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.

- Paul didn't need the endorsement of the apostles...
- ...but the fact that he had their endorsement further verifies his apostleship

#5: The apostles considered Paul's writing as Scripture.

- One of the weak arguments that critics bring is:
 - o "What would they have understood to be Scripture?"
 - o "There was not unified Bible at this point...so they could only be talking about the Old Testament."

2 Peter 3:14–18

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found spotless and blameless by Him, at peace, ¹⁵ and regard the patience of our Lord *as* salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, ¹⁶ as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which there are some things that are hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

- Peter recognized that Paul's writing were Scripture.
- And what does Paul mean by Scripture?

2 Peter 1:20–21

²⁰ *But* know this first *of all*, that no prophecy of Scripture becomes *a matter of someone's* own interpretation, ²¹ for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

- Scripture is NEVER simply man's thoughts about God
 - o Which is exactly how those who want to tear down the Bible's authority describe it.
 - o "These guys were doing the best in their time...with their limited understand...try to state what they think God was like."
- INSTEAD...Scripture was created...
 - o ...by the Holy Spirit "moving" people to write...
 - o ...the actual thoughts of God...
 - o ...through the personalities of the authors.

- AND Paul was certainly one of those authors.
- Peter also recognized that there were people trying to distort/twist the truths in Paul's writings back then...in similar ways that they are today.

¹⁷ You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unscrupulous people and lose your own firm commitment, ¹⁸ but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

- Let's not be carried away by their deceitful arguments.
- The question has to be asked...WHY?
 - o What would motivate these people distort Scripture?
 - o Why would they want to tear down the Paul's teaching?
- It has been the same motive of every attempt throughout history...
 - o IF it's only man's thoughts.
 - o THEN I can pick and choose what I want.
 - I become the authority over what it says...instead of having to submit to its authority.
- SO WHY...would there be people in THIS GENERATION trying to discard or diminish the authority of the teachings of the Apostle Paul?
 - o What motivates the unscrupulous people in 2024?
- If you read them...the WHY becomes pretty clear in almost every one of their writings.
 - o If you look at their lives...the WHY becomes clear in how they live their lives.
 - o SEXUAL FREEDOM
- While Jesus is VERY CLEAR that sexual relationships are between one man/one woman for life...
 - o He never explicitly speaks negatively about homosexuality.
- Guess who is VERY CLEAR about homosexuality...PAUL.
 - o So...undermine Paul...strengthen your case for acceptance of LGBTQ sin.

"Sometimes, to obey Jesus, we might have to admit that the Bible falls short. In those cases, we must cling tightly to the Good Shepherd and remember His command: 'Love one another as I have loved you.' [John 13:34]"

- Keith Giles, Jesus Unbound: Liberating the Word of God from the Bible

- We must also remember that He said...
 - o "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault..." [Mt. 18:15]
 - o "If you love me, you will keep My commandments." [John 14:15]
- The authors are kings of half-truths.
- Our Good Shepherd also said...

- “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.” (Matthew 7:15–16a)
- May God give us the discernment to see through their schemes.

QUESTIONS? ...COMMENTS?

PRAY