

“And it came to pass that when they were buried in the deep there was no water that could hurt them, their vessels being tight like unto a dish, and also they were *tight like unto the ark of Noah*. . . .

“And it came to pass that the wind did never cease to blow towards the promised land while they were upon the waters; and thus were they driven forth before the wind.” (Ether 6:5-8)

When the Ark first began to move upon the water Noah would have been able to estimate his location by the mountain peaks which remained visible. These would also be objects of peril to the floating titanic with its precious cargo. In due time, however, the high peaks began to disappear, for the scripture says: “And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the face of the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits and upward did the water prevail; and the mountains were covered.”⁸⁴

DID THE FLOOD COVER THE ENTIRE EARTH?

Many students have wondered how such a thing could be possible. Numerous explanations have been given. The important thing to keep in mind, however, is that persons living in that day witnessed the fact that it did occur. In summarizing these events for modern students the Lord Himself verifies that it did occur. The scripture could not be much plainer than to say that “all the high hills under the whole heavens were covered . . . and the mountains were covered.” The scriptures indicate that it was not until the tenth month after the commencement of the Flood that the tops of the mountains were again seen!⁸⁵

Some students have assumed that this was just a local flood and have believed that the Bible is merely describing the destruction of life in a “given area.” However, the scriptures clearly refute any such interpretation.

⁸⁴Insp. Vers. Gen. 8:41

⁸⁵Genesis 8:5

First, the Lord declared that this great Flood would destroy "all flesh from off the earth."³⁶ No local flood would have fulfilled this prediction.

Second, we know from modern scriptures that the Ark was launched from the Western Hemisphere and finally came to rest on a high peak of the Eastern Hemisphere. This would require a world-wide flood.

Third, the Lord has verified the fact that the Flood included the part of the earth which is now America. He made known to Ether that "after the waters had receded from off the face of *this land* it became a choice land above all other lands, a chosen land of the Lord."³⁷ Note also that after the Flood it was necessary for the Jaredites to replenish America with animal life by bringing with them "flocks and herds and whatsoever beast or animal or fowl they should carry with them." (Ether 6:4)

Fourth, the great Flood is spoken of as the "baptism" of the earth or burial of the earth in water. As Brigham Young declared: "The earth . . . has been baptized with water, and will, in the future be baptized with fire and the Holy Ghost, to be prepared to go back into the celestial presence of God."³⁸ The symbolism of baptism for the earth would require a universal flood. John A. Widtsoe declared: "The Latter-day Saints . . . look upon the Flood as a baptism of the earth, symbolizing a cleansing of the impurities of the past, and the beginning of a new life. This has been repeatedly taught by the leaders of the Church. The deluge was an immersion of the earth in water."³⁹

As the landmarks disappeared and the fury of the waves lashed over the Ark, perhaps Noah sealed up the Ark so that it was "tight like a dish." As previously mentioned the Jaredite barges are said to have been "like unto the ark of Noah"⁴⁰ and these vessels are described as being "exceeding tight, even that they would hold water

³⁶Insp. Vers. Gen. 8:17

³⁷Ether 13:2

³⁸*Disc. of Brigham Young*, p. 603

³⁹*Evidences and Reconciliations*, Vol. I, p. 111

⁴⁰Ether 6:7

like unto a dish; and the bottom thereof was tight like unto a dish; and the sides thereof were tight like unto a dish; and the ends thereof were peaked and the top thereof was tight like unto a dish."⁴¹

About nine-and-a-half months after the commencement of the Flood Noah is described as opening a window to release a raven. This would indicate that during most of the voyage the windows had been kept sealed so as to prevent the water from swamping the great vessel during the continuous storm.

Perhaps during moments of quiet the windows were opened for air just as the Jaredites did with their barges.⁴²

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 2:17

⁴²*Ibid.*, 3:20