

5 Things the Story of Noah Didn't Teach That Many Do

Read Time: 5 Minutes 32 Seconds

If you are like me, over the years I have had to unlearn many of the things that I was taught were in the Bible.

Some of these things I learned from children's books or children's Bibles. Some I learned from movies, television programs or radio stories. While others, I learned from preachers who gained their biblical education at MSU (Making Stuff Up).

While there is a long list of things that are regularly taught in synagogues and churches that are just plain wrong, it is rare to find as many in one story in the Bible, as there are in the story of Noah and the flood. In this one chapter alone, there are at least five things that are regularly taught as biblical truth that are not true at all.

I am going to list these five unbiblical teachings in order from least controversial to most controversial:

1. The first untrue teaching from the story of Noah and the flood is that there were two animals of each kind on the ark.

The truth is that there were seven pairs of clean animals and two pairs of unclean animals.

"Of every clean animal you shall take with you seven of each kind, male and female; and of the animals which themselves are not clean two, male and female ..." (Gen. 7:2).

2. The second untrue teaching that many of us learned in children's classes or from children's books or Bibles, is that Noah gathered or trapped the animals that he brought upon the Ark.

The truth is that G-D brought the animals to Noah.

“Of the clean animals and unclean animals, the flying creatures and everything that crawls on the ground, nine two by two, they came to Noah, into the ark, male and female, just as God commanded Noah” (Gen. 7:8).

3. The third untrue teaching from the story of Noah is that the flood lasted 40 days and 40 nights.

The truth is that the flood lasted just about one year. The flood began when Noah was 600 years old and it ended when Noah was 601 years old.

“After the seven days, the floodwaters were upon the land. In the 600th year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the 17th day of the month, on this day, all the water sources of the great deep burst open, and the windows of the sky were opened” (Gen. 7:10).

“It was in his 601st year—in the first month, on the first day of the month—that the waters had dried up from the land. Then Noah removed the cover of the ark and he looked, and behold, the surface of the ground had dried up” (Gen. 8:13).

4. The fourth untrue thing taught about the Noah story we actually read before we are introduced to Noah; as G-D begins to describe the decline into sinfulness that precipitates the flood.

“Then Adonai said, ‘My Spirit will not remain with humankind forever, since they are flesh. So, their days will be 120 years’” (Gen. 6:3).

From these words, preachers, rabbis, teachers etc. have claimed that a righteous man’s lifespan should be 120 years long. However, when read in context the truth is that G-D was stating that in 120 years the flood would take place and it did just as He said. That doesn’t mean men can’t live to be

120 or more after all Noah lives to be over 600 just after G-D made this statement.

5. The fifth untruth from the story of Noah again takes place preceding the mention of Noah at the beginning of Genesis chapter 6, and this untruth is probably the most controversial of the five I am sharing today.

This untruth concerns the Nephilim mentioned in Genesis 6:4:

“The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, whenever the sons of God came to the daughters of men, and gave birth to them. Those were the mighty men of old, men of renown.”

There are those that use this one statement out of context to establish the untruth that Nephilim were fallen angels who had relations with human women, and brought forth giants into the world. However, if you actually read the text in context you will see that this is not what these verses say at all:

“Now when humankind began to multiply on the face of the ground and daughters were born to them, then the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were good and they took for themselves wives, any they chose. Then Adonai said, ‘My Spirit will not remain with humankind forever, since they are flesh. So their days will be 120 years.’ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, whenever the sons of God came to the daughters of men, and gave birth to them. Those were the mighty men of old, men of renown” (Gen. 6:1-4).

In context you will notice that the sons of G-D and the daughter of men were both spoken of before Nephilim are mentioned. When we read about the Nephilim we see they were on the earth mentioned separately from the sons of G-D and daughters of men.

There is nothing in these verses to base the teaching that Nephilim were the sons of G-D nor to say they had relations

with the daughters of men. Nephilim means fallen ones so it is possible that these Nephilim were fallen angels who were upon the earth. But there is nothing in the text to establish the false belief that the Nephilim were fallen angels who had relations with human women and brought forth hybrid human/angel babies.

The more I study the Bible the more I learn I must unlearn the many things I was taught the Bible taught, but didn't.

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