

Inside Noah's Ark with Dr. Tim Chaffey

(November 24, 2023)

FRANK:

You know, ladies and gentlemen, one of the biggest objections that skeptics have, or just the average people have to the Bible is Noah's ark. Can you really believe in Noah's ark? I mean, it seems outlandish, doesn't it? And I mean, just think about some practical aspects of Noah's ark. How could you build such a boat? How could you possibly track down all the animals? I mean, there are well over a million species of animals that have been identified. So, how could you even fit that many on the ark? And how could eight people take care of so many animals? Where would they get the food, the water? What would they do with the waste? What about fresh air?

And why, by the way, would God decide to kill so many people and decide to kill them in an awful way, drowning? Why not just kill them instantaneously? Well, these are questions we're going to deal with today. Because right after I went to the University of Cincinnati on November 2, I decided to stop down at the Ark Encounter. And the Ark Encounter is an amazing place that actually has a full-size replica of what the Bible says are the dimensions of Noah's ark. And I was shown around by Dr. Timothy Chaffey, who is really the Content Manager for the Ark Encounter and the Creation Museum, which is maybe 30 or 40 miles away.

But I just was at the Ark Encounter. And Dr. Chaffey has written about two dozen books. One of them is called 'Inside Noah's Ark: Why it Worked.' And it answers some of the questions that I just brought up. And so, my guest today is Dr. Tim Chaffey. Tim, great being with you. How are you?

TIM:

I'm doing great, Frank. It's good to see you again.

FRANK:

Yeah, it was great. You did such a wonderful job on the content in the Ark Encounter and the tour, which was just a whole lot of fun. I met Ken Ham, and then I met you, and you took me around. And I was really impressed with the whole encounter. First of all, before we get to some of those questions I brought up at the top of the show, how did you get involved in doing this at all? What's your history? How did you get to where you are right now?

TIM:

Yeah, that's a good question. I had been a Christian school teacher for six years, and a pastor/associate pastor at two churches for about five years. I had been somebody who had gone to a lot of conferences that Answers in Genesis had put on and had brought students over to help build the Creation Museum when that was under construction back in the early 2000's. And so, it's a ministry, Answers in Genesis, that I wanted to be a part of for quite a while. And



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one day, they called me up and said, hey, we've got a position for you as a writer and editor in the web department. And so, I did that for about two and a half years. And then they announced the Ark Encounter, and they said they needed a Content Manager. And I guess I was the guy that got prepared to be put in that place. I never dreamed I would get to do that. And, you know, I think every writer would love to have a million people a year walking through reading the stuff that they wrote. So, that was quite an opportunity and a great responsibility too.

FRANK:

Yeah, so that is actually what goes on there, ladies and gentlemen. About a million guests a year go to the Ark Encounter, which is south of the Cincinnati airport in Kentucky, about 30 minutes or so. And it really is an impressive structure. And it's not just the ark that you go through there, Tim. You have a bunch of other things that are in that. How many acres you have there, something like 500 acres?

TIM:

About 850. We've developed about a quarter of that so far. And we've got a zoo and virtual reality building that people can go and kind of get like a time travel adventure. We've got a carousel for the kids that you can ride on some creature that you'll never be able to ride on any other carousel. So, I got to ride a dinosaur. So, my bucket list is complete.

FRANK:

Yeah, that's right. Now first of all, who had the vision for the Ark Encounter? And how long did it take before it went from vision to here, it's done? Here it is.

TIM:

I think the first mention of it was a board meeting back in about 2004 while they were still building the Creation Museum. That was before I was on board at the ministry. But they said, well, let's build the museum first. And if we get this up and running, then maybe the ark could be a possibility. So, we officially announced that in December of 2010, and we started doing the fundraising at that point. And then we got the green light. And I think it was March or April of 2014, that we had enough money to make sure we could open it. And that's when it was full speed ahead. So, we broke ground in May of 2014, and we opened two years and two months later, July of '16. So, it took about 26 months.

FRANK:

That's amazing. There are some houses I know that take longer to build than that, two years and two months.

TIM:

Yeah. We actually had a couple hundred carpenters, and Amish craftsmen, and all sorts of other things. [Laughter]

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FRANK:

Give us some dimensions of the ark. This is basically from the Bible, but you built it to the biblical dimension. So how big is the Ark Encounter?

TIM:

Yeah, so the Bible gives us the dimensions in cubit, 300 X 50 X 30. But what cubit did they use? We don't really know. I mean, Frank, you know I'm pretty tall at about 6'9". So, that fits on the camera. That's a 22 inch cubit.

FRANK:

So, a cubit is from the elbow to the end of the finger. Is that right?

TIM:

Yep. And there's all sorts of different cubit lengths in the ancient Near East. One of the shorter ones is like a 17.5 inch. That's what was used for Hezekiah's tunnel. So, we picked that one. But then we also noticed that a lot of ancient major building projects like temples, pyramids, a lot of times were built on what's called a long or royal cubit, where you'd add the width of four fingers. So, we added 2.9 inches so that we have a 20.4 inch cubit. For the Ark Encounter, that gives us an ark that is 510 feet long, 82 feet wide, and 51 feet tall, so 1.88 million cubic feet.

FRANK:

And how many decks are in the Ark Encounter?

TIM:

So, there are three decks for the public to view. We do have one extra on the top where we've got a little bit of storage and some offices, but Noah had three. And that's what the public [unintelligible].

FRANK:

Can you do that in square feet? I mean, how many square feet is that? Do you know?

TIM:

I think it's about 110,000 square feet of floor space that people can go through.

FRANK:

Okay, 110,000 square feet. And it's very well done, ladies and gentlemen. As I say, I was just there in earlier November. Give us an intellectual overview of what you'll see when you go into the...I say intellectual because most people listen to this. They don't see it on video. So, just kind of describe what you'll see when you go through the Ark Encounter, Tim.

TIM:

Sure, it's sort of like one giant feasibility study. You know, could this have been done historically, scientifically? And so, when you walk in, you're going to see a lot of the cages that

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would be suitable for putting the animals in. We had to calculate how many animals, and how much space they take up, how much food they need, all those things. And so, the first deck, you're getting introduced to the concept of animal kinds, and how they would be fed, how they would be stored.

And then on deck two, you kind of get like life on the ark. What would it have been like for Noah and his family, and how could they take care of the things they have to do? And then deck three, after you go through the living quarters, you have a whole side of the ark that is dedicated to more of the historical and scientific issues related to the ark, and the flood, and takes you up to the modern time.

FRANK:

Yeah, it's extremely well done, and you could spend a whole day in there. You have so many exhibits in there, Tim. Many of them you have written, and they're extremely interesting. It's worth seeing, friends. If you're ever near Cincinnati, Ohio, even if you're not near it, you can make a trip there and see the Ark Encounter. What are the best times to go there, Tim? I know the summer's got to be more crowded than the winter. But are you open every day of the year? What days are you open? What days are you closed?

TIM:

During the summer months, we're open every day of the week. And then when it's off-peak season, we are not open on Sundays. And I know this week, we're off Thanksgiving. Then, I think in January, and February, and maybe the first week of March, we won't be open on Mondays and Tuesdays either. We've done that the last couple of years. That's the slower season. So, I would encourage people to just double-check the website before they go. If they like big crowds, come in the summer. If you don't like big crowds, come in January and February on the days that we're open. But then you'll have to walk outside, and it's a little bit colder too.

FRANK:

And it's ArkEncounter.com? Where do they go?

TIM:

Yep, ArkEncounter.com.

FRANK:

ArkEncounter.com is where you need to go. Now, when we come back from the break ladies and gentlemen, we're going to get into some of the skeptical questions that people have. I mean, some of the ones I mentioned at the top of the program. You know, how could Noah track down all these animals? There's got to be a million of them. How could they fit on the ark? Was it even feasible to have that many animals and take care of them? All that. We're going to get into it right after the break. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist on the American Family Radio network with me, Frank Turek. We're back in two minutes.

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If you want to be happy, ladies and gentlemen, an absolute prerequisite is for you to be thankful. You cannot get any contentment or happiness if you're not thankful. This is Thanksgiving weekend. Think about everything that you're thankful for. And in America, we have a lot to be thankful for. So, dwell on that a little bit this Thanksgiving weekend. My guest today is Dr. Tim Chaffey, who not only is the Content Manager of the Ark Encounter, they're just south of Cincinnati. He's also the author of several books. One of them is called 'Inside Noah's Ark: Why it Worked.'

And in this program, we're dealing with some of the skeptical questions that people have about Noah's ark. Let me just answer one of them very quickly. People go, this is crazy. It could never happen. Ladies and gentlemen, the greatest miracle in the Bible is not Noah's ark, or Jonah and the whale, or even the resurrection of Jesus. The greatest miracle in the Bible is the first verse. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. If that verse is true, every other verse is at least possible. If God created the entire universe out of nothing, He can do anything that you read in the pages of the Bible.

And the interesting thing is, even atheists today are admitting that space, time, and matter had a beginning out of nothing. If that's the case, if Genesis 1:1 is true, certainly Noah's ark is possible, as well as Jonah, as well as the resurrection, as well as the parting of the Red Sea, as well as walking on water, and healing all sorts of diseases. So, let's just get that out on the table right now before we go any further. But Tim, I want to ask you some of these questions that people have. And some of these you answer in the book, 'Inside Noah's Ark.' First of all, let's deal with the question about tracking down animals. How could eight people track down all these animals? Let's start right there.

TIM:

Yeah, you know, it'd be helpful if when the skeptic brings things up, they would actually check the Bible first before they ask the question. Because in Genesis 6, God tells Noah that two of every kind will come to you. So, Noah didn't have to track down the animals. God's going to bring them to him. So, that handles that objection. And whenever I talk about that, I want to remind people, whenever you hear something from a skeptic challenging you about the Bible, or they claim that it's from the Bible, don't take their word for it. Let them show you from Scripture that it says that. And a lot of times, they won't know where it is. They're just repeating what they've heard.

FRANK:

How about the objection that there are a million species of animals out there? There's no way any boat could contain them all. So, how would you respond to that?

TIM:

Yeah, when you look at like the IUCN Red List, that's what we use for the endangered species list. They have 1.77 or 1.78 million species that have been identified. But what people don't tell you is that this includes all of the marine creatures, which is where the vast majority of life is on

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earth. That includes all the micro-organisms, one-celled organisms, bacteria, all that kind of thing. It includes all the plants. No, they didn't have to bring any of those. It includes over a million species of insects, which he most likely didn't have to bring those either. They don't really fit the criteria of the creatures that are going on board the ark.

And so, when you're talking about the land animals, or land dependent animals, we've only ever discovered about 40,000 total, that includes fossil record and everything. And that's of the species. But Noah didn't have to bring every species. He just needs two of each kind. And so, when you think about wolves, and coyotes, and dingoes, those are all dogs. Noah just needs two dogs; you don't need two of each of those different species. And so, the number really gets down to about 1400 and they fit in there just fine.

FRANK:

Fourteen-hundred kinds. I know this is a bit controversial, biologically, the difference between...first of all, what is a species? And what is a kind? And biologically, they don't even use the word kind, do they? What do they use?

TIM:

No, kind comes from the Bible. The Hebrew word is min. And so, it's according to their kind. They would talk about species, and genus, and family. We would say that the kind is roughly equivalent to the family level in our classification system, the kind of Linnaean taxonomy that we use. So, when you think about the bears, you have polars, and grizzlies, and pandas, and brown bears, black bears. They are lots of different species, but they're all within the bear family. We would say those are all part of the same kind. And so, Noah just needs two bears. He doesn't need two of each of those. We know that polar bears and grizzlies can mix. You can get a grolar or a pizzly, depending on which one's the male.

And so, you can get crosses between a lot of those. And so, if the creatures can interbreed, they belong to the same kind. That was our first criteria. Sometimes you don't have all that data available. You know, with fossils, you can't see if fossils can breed so you have to look at the anatomy and just see, do they look like they belong in the same kind based on their structure. And then if you have genetic information, you can test that as well to see if they belong in the same kind. So, we had three criteria, as far as whether or not creatures belong in the same one. And yes, just under 1400. And that's using probably a high estimate. Because if we didn't have all the data we needed, we separated them out, even though we strongly suspected they belong to the same kind.

FRANK:

Alright, so are you then suggesting there's some sort of rapid evolution of kinds into species after that? I mean, how do you explain? If you've just got two bears, how do we have all these different kinds of bears now?

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TIM:

Right? Yeah, some people will say that. Like, oh, you guys believe in like crazy, hyper rapid evolution? No, it's actually the opposite of evolution. When you're taking something that is more genetically diverse or robust, maybe a deeper gene pool, if you will, these creatures will speciate, you know, whether they're separated by different boundaries geographically. So, what happens in that process, as they're becoming more and more specific, they're losing genetic information. They're not gaining new information.

When you go from something that might be more like a wolf down to something like a poodle, that's a loss of information, genetically speaking. And so, it's not evolution at all. It's actually the opposite of evolution. Evolution requires that net gain of genetic information, information that wasn't available before this. What we're talking about is using genetic information that's already there. That's designed to keep the species strong. So, it's really moving in the opposite direction of evolution. It's all we've ever observed. So, we would say that the data fits our model better than it does the evolutionary view.

FRANK:

So, is the definition then of a family or kind, as the Bible would say, does that mean that the species within that family can all interbreed?

TIM:

Not necessarily today. It could be that they've become so specialized and distinct in their environments that maybe for whatever their biological clocks, if you will, don't correspond to the other ones anymore. So, it could be that they get beyond that point. But there are some where they're classified as different species and they still can interbreed, like the wolf and coyote, and some of the cats can do that as well. You know, you've got tigers, and lions, and things like that.

FRANK:

So, when you do all the math, according to your calculations, and these calculations, by the way, friends are in the book 'Inside Noah's Ark: Why it Worked' by Dr. Tim Chaffey, my guest today, and Laura Welch, who illustrated much of what's in the book here. I assume, or she's partially an editor of it. When you do all the math, how many land animals (including birds) were on the ark?

TIM:

Yeah, so I mentioned earlier, you have just under 1400 kinds. But then you've got to do two of each kind. But the Bible says to bring seven or seven pairs, depending on which translation you're reading. Because the Hebrew scholars aren't completely in agreement on whether or not seven, seven, a male and female, means 14 or seven. So, we went with 14. We always went with a higher number, just so that people couldn't accuse us of cheating. [Unintelligible] to figure out the numbers. So, you have to bring 14 of each of the clean animals and all of the flying creatures. So, we have about 6700 total animals accounted for. And again, that number is probably a high estimate.

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FRANK:

Sixty-seven hundred animals on the ark, according to your calculations, given the number of animals you thought. And you're using approximately. No one knows the exact date. How far back was Noah's Ark?

TIM:

So, if you're using the Masoretic text here, roughly 4,400 years ago. If you had the Septuagint, that would push it back by 650 to 780 years. So, you know, a little over 5,000. So, yeah. We'd say about 4,400 years ago.

FRANK:

Okay, so at that time, you're using what was known at the time or what you knew about that time with regard to the number of animals that were alive. You did all the math. It's all in the book. You've got about 6,700 animals on Noah's Ark. You've got three decks over 110,000 square feet, and you say all this fits.

TIM:

Yeah. Well, when I said 110,000 square feet, that's our exhibit space. You've seen it, the huge ramp in the middle. You'd have more floor space than that. Yeah, it actually fits really well. I would say like Goldilocks, it's not too small, not too large. It's just right. Which is what we'd expect. God is the one who told Noah how big to build the ark, and so it should fit right. But that's when we're accounting for all of the food they would need, for all of the water that they would need. And then, we actually made the cage size a little bit bigger than what would be required. And they do fit.

FRANK:

Yeah, ladies and gentlemen, when you go see the Ark Encounter, you'll see all this. You'll see all these cages. You'll see all these storage jars. You'll see the physical structure of all this, and it will give you a sense that yeah, this is certainly possible. And as you mentioned earlier, Tim, that God said He would bring the animals to the ark. Obviously, if God wanted to do any miracle He could related to this entire endeavor, He could. But other than God bringing the animals to the ark, you're assuming God doesn't do anything supernaturally in order to accommodate these animals or to take care of these animals, correct?

TIM:

Yeah, that was our assumption. We know that He could if He wanted to, sure. But the language seems to imply in Genesis 8:1 where it says God remembered Noah. It kind of implies that He wasn't right there in the midst of it all the time. So, our approach was, if it doesn't say miracle, don't assume miracle. God gives people the talents, and the abilities, the skills to do the things that He calls them to do. So, did He put all the animals to sleep so that they wouldn't have to take care of them? That wasn't our assumption. Some people have asked that quite a bit. They may have been more sluggish in stormy weather.

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A lot of animals are that way and they're not getting a lot of exercise. And maybe they don't eat as much, but they still have to take care of them. And if I can go back to the last question a little bit. A lot of times people think of the big animals like giraffes and elephants, and they think, how can these things fit? Remember, they were once small too when they were younger. You don't have to bring the biggest, oldest ones around. But that's what we get in our mind. And we think how could they possibly fit?

FRANK:

You wouldn't have made it on the ark, Tim. You're too tall. We've got to take small animals. [Laughter]

TIM:

You've got to take some little people, not me.

FRANK:

That's right. I'm not bringing this guy who's 6'9" on it. He could have been one of the Nephilim.

TIM:

I would get mistaken for one of them. I'm done.

FRANK:

So yeah, you could take smaller animals. That's certainly the case. And you've got eight people taking care of all these animals. Could they have really done that? We've only got, you know, 40 seconds, we can pick it up on the other side of the break. But start the answer anyway.

TIM:

Yeah. If you think about it, most of the animals are really small. Eighty-five percent of them are smaller than 10 kilograms, so about 22 pounds. And for some animals, things like hamsters, gerbils a lot of those, you don't need to feed them every day. You have a little food trough that you can fill up once a week, every two weeks, and they're good to go. So, you don't have to feed each animal every single day. So, you work smarter, not harder. And you can come up with a system that will be more efficient. You've got eight people, if that's their main job during the week, to care for the animals, yeah you can get through it. Remember, it's not a zoo where you're trying to take care of the animals to our modern specifications. It's an emergency situation.

FRANK:

Alright hang on. We're going to come right back after the break, ladies and gentlemen. We're talking to Tim Chaffey. He is the content director of the Ark Encounter, ArkEncounter.com. If you haven't been there, you need to go. I'm Frank Turek. We're back in two minutes. Don't go anywhere.

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Welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with me, Frank Turek, on the American Family Radio network. If you're low on the FM dial looking for National Public Radio, go no further. We're actually going to tell you the truth here. That's our intent anyway. You're never going to hear this on NPR.

We're talking about Noah's Ark. If we just take the biblical account at face value, is that even possible? Let's assume God exists. We have evidence He does exist. We have evidence that Genesis 1:1 is true. If He can create the whole universe out of nothing, certainly He can do the Noah's Ark miracle. But we're not assuming a miracle here, other than God bringing the animals to the ark. Is it possible you could build a boat this big and put all these animals on it, and take care of all these animals, have the food and water, and all that?

We're talking to Dr. Tim Chaffey, who was instrumental in bringing forth the Ark Encounter. He's the content manager for it. He's written a couple of dozen books. One of them is called 'Inside Noah's Ark: Why it Worked.' Before I get back to Dr. Chaffey, let me point out one thing. I'm going to be out in Tucson, Arizona at Calvary Chapel Tucson, on December 2-3. We're doing I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. I'll be there the Saturday night service, morning services on Sunday, and then Sunday night. We'll have Q&A Sunday night as well.

And then, well, actually, before that, this coming Monday, right after Thanksgiving, we're doing our 12th edition of 'Digging Up the Bible.' We're going through the major archaeological discoveries of the Bible. You can watch that live on our YouTube channel 7:30pm Eastern Time. And then the following Monday, December 4, we're going to do the same thing. Hopefully you can be a part of that as well. It won't be left on YouTube very long. So, if you want to see that particular episode of 'Digging Up the Bible,' check it out there.

And then later on, the 16th - 19th of December, I'll be out at AmericaFest, run by my friend, Charlie Kirk. Go to AmericaFest.com. There's going to be a bazillion speakers there. I'm just a small person there in this sea of people. But you need to check it out. It's a fun celebration of America. And we're trying to get the Church to take a stand for righteousness and truth because Jesus told us to love our neighbor. And we need to do that in every area of life.

Alright, Dr. Tim Chaffey. Let's go back to the question. I don't know if we completed the answer here. How could eight people take care of all these animals? You said, well, some of them are easy to take care of. What about the more difficult ones? And would you have enough food to take care of all those 6,700 animals on the ark?

TIM:

That's what we worked into our calculations, how much space do they need for all of the food. There is enough room. One thing we did assume is that they were able to capture some of the water that is raining. So, if you use the roof to capture some of that, all you would need is about an inch of rain every single week to have enough water for all the animals and the people. Which obviously, during the flood, you're going to have at least an inch a week. So, that's not

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too big of a concern. I think when we went to break, I was talking about how so many people try to look at our modern zoos and the specification they have for how much space an animal needs to survive in order to keep it. But that's not what we're dealing with. This is an emergency situation. If you think about your own home, you might have four or five people in this house. But if it was an emergency and your house was the only one in the area still around, you could fit five to ten times more than that in there for the time. It may not be comfortable, may not be fun. But if it's life or death, yeah, you can do it.

FRANK:

Well, it's amazing on all the calculations you did and how you incorporated them into the structure. Give us some insights into the structure. What is this thing built of and how long is it going to last?

TIM:

Yeah, so the Ark Encounter. It's the largest freestanding timber-frame structure in the world. And if you've seen the different timbers. You've got, you know, Engelmann spruce and Douglas fir in there. The outside material is a Radiata Pine from New Zealand and it's got a 50 year warranty on it. So, it better last 50 years. I may not be around for the last part of that. But yeah. It's built to last. I mean, it's very sturdy. It's a good thing I was not involved in the construction because it would have already tipped over a long time ago.

FRANK:

That's right. And some of the, I guess for lack of a better term, the beams in there, what are they made of?

TIM:

Yeah, so the large timbers that you see in there, the huge round ones that we call the lodge poles, those are primarily Engelmann spruce. And then the large, milled ones, the square timbers that are used for the headers and some of the columns, those are Douglas fir. So, those are the major timbers.

FRANK:

And some of them came from New Zealand, you said?

TIM:

New Zealand was the covering, the outside wood.

FRANK:

Oh, alright. Yeah, it's quite an impressive structure. And to build it in 26 months is amazing to me, just to coordinate that whole thing. I don't know how many different change orders you had. For you architects out there, you know what that means, right? Oh, change order. I designed it this way, but now we're trying to build it. We need to change it. I mean, you must have had an amazing general contractor to pull that thing off.

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TIM:

Yeah, we really did. And, you know, we believe the whole project was of God, that it was something that we're doing for His glory and He's going to make it work out. And so, He brought the right people at the right time, whether that is for the construction, or for the design team that I'm part of. You know, bringing all the right people at the right time to do the job that they were called to do so that the Gospel can be shared to the maximum number of people.

FRANK:

And the Gospel is throughout it, ladies and gentlemen. It's not just a plausibility display, although it is that. It's also pointing out that we need a savior, and you'll see that in there. In fact, Tim has put so much of the Gospel throughout the entire thing, the entire team has. You're not going to walk out of there not knowing the Gospel. So, that's the beauty of it, in addition to the fact it's an amazing structure and it does give you a sense of, wow. This could really happen.

Also, Tim, I've been reading through the book 'Inside Noah's Ark.' What is your assumption regarding, and this is in the book. That's why I mentioned it. What is your assumption regarding the amount of technology, or the kind of technology someone trying to build this thing 4,400 or 5,000 years ago would have? Do we even know?

TIM:

Yeah, it's hard to know because the earliest archaeological finds that we come up with our post Babel, everything that we're digging up. And so, the flood represented a technological reset. So, whatever they had at that time, other than what survived in the ark itself would have been lost. You know, I don't think that they would have had nuclear power subs, or spaceships. Anything that would help them survive a global flood, I don't think they had that level of technology. But I don't think it's too farfetched to think that they had something that would have been comparable maybe to like the Roman Empire during Jesus's day or maybe the Greek culture before that, where you have civilization that can build some pretty remarkable things.

And yet, there's still a very decadent society, which is like what you read about in the Bible for Noah's time. It was a very wicked world. But I think that people have been very intelligent from the beginning. And they're creative. They're ingenious. They can come up with ways of doing some pretty remarkable things. I'd even say, we kind of scratched our heads at, like the Great Pyramid or Stonehenge and wonder, how did they do that? They're smart. It wasn't aliens.

FRANK:

I scratch my head at some of these cathedrals I've been in Europe. I went to the cathedral and Reims, France. I just looked at it. I go, this thing was built 800 years ago. How did they do this? No heavy equipment? No cranes? This is phenomenal. I don't know. We don't know. We don't know how they could do such a thing. How long did it take? Does the Bible say how long it took to build the ark?

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TIM:

So, there are a lot of people who think it was 120 years based on Genesis 6:3. They think that that's a countdown to the flood. That's not really my view. But I think there's a problem with that view in terms of thinking that's how long it took. When God told Noah to build the ark, He says he's going to make a covenant with him, his wife, and his three sons, and their wives who are with them. So, it sounds like the boys were already grown up and married at that point, which means it had to be less than 100 years because Noah was 500 when his oldest son was born, and the flood came 100 years later. So, it had to be under 100. And you've got to give enough time for the boys to grow up and get married. So, maybe 50-75 years max.

FRANK:

I know that Christians argue over whether this was a global flood or regional flood. Those who say a regional flood will say yes, it covered the earth where there were people, where people were inhabiting the earth, but not the entire Earth. I know you guys take a global flood look. Is there evidence for a global flood outside the Bible?

TIM:

I think so. In fact, I think I just saw it this last weekend. We were talking before the show. I was hiking through the Grand Canyon, north rim to south rim. I'm still a little sore. That's quite a trek. But you see these massive rock layers that are found all around the globe. So, for example, you have the tapeat sandstone that is down at the very bottom of the canyon, sitting on top of what's called the Great Unconformity. And you can see that same rock layer in northern Wisconsin where I used to live. You can find it in Israel. You can see it in Northern Africa. So yeah, the same rock layer in many places around the globe. And it means it was laid down at the same time. It's the same composition, and it's sitting right on top of that Unconformity. But you have other things like that.

So, what we find in the fossil record are all of these sedimentary layers, miles of them in a sense, and they're full of fossils. So, less sedimentary layers mean that they're laid down by water, and all these creatures are buried in that. And there's so much evidence that they were buried rapidly. It's not something that sits on the land. And you know, when an animal dies, it doesn't become a fossil. If it just sits there, it rots and gets eaten by other creatures. In order for it to become a fossil, it has to be buried rapidly. And we find evidence for that around the globe as well.

FRANK:

There is evidence as well, just about every ancient culture has a great flood story. So, that's more evidence that there was a great flood. And some of them even talk about building a boat. Although the other accounts don't have a ship worthy, or I should say, a seaworthy boat like the Bible does. I mean, would Noah's Ark float? I mean, would it really? Is it seaworthy according to the description?

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TIM:

Yeah, actually, it's got the right dimensions of what our large ships do today, you know, like a six to one ratio of the length to width and everything, which we have for our large vessels. A lot of people will say, you know, like Bill Nye, the guy who plays 'The Science Guy,' says you can't build wooden ships that large because they just sink. There's too many problems. And he uses the example of the Wyoming, which was built in the early 1900's. It was 430 feet long from tip to tip. So, not quite the size of the ark, but pretty big. And he says the problem is when you put it on the water, it twisted, and bent, and all these leaks, and then it sank and 14 people on board were killed.

And that's true. But he never mentions the fact that it carried thousands of tons of cargo back and forth across the Atlantic for almost 15 years. You can build something that large, there's just certain challenges that need to be overcome. But if you know what they are, they can be overcome. But now we don't make large vessels out of wood. You don't need to. You can do it cheaper and sturdier when you're using steel or other metals.

FRANK:

And so, that ship actually was seaworthy for 15 years. Noah's Ark would have to be seaworthy for about a year.

TIM:

Yeah, well, maximum of five months before it lands on the mountains of Ararat. And then water starts going down after that. Yeah.

FRANK:

By the way everybody wants to know, is Noah's Ark still out there? Has somebody discovered it? We'll talk about that after the break. In fact, in 2006, I went on a Noah's Ark expedition into Iran. Yes, Iran, because the Bible doesn't say Mount Ararat. It says the mountains of Ararat. I went with Bob Cornuke, and Josh McDowell, and several others. But I'm going to get Dr. Tim Chaffey's perspective on that. We'll also talk about why God would kill people this way. That sure doesn't seem right or moral. And atheists are quick to point that out. We'll talk about some other issues as well. It's the Ark Encounter, ArkEncounter.com. You need to go there if you're anywhere near Cincinnati, Ohio. A lot more with Dr. Tim Chaffey. I'm Frank Turek. Don't go anywhere. Happy Thanksgiving. Back in two minutes.

Keep an eye out, ladies and gentlemen. The next podcast will be one of the most important podcasts we've ever done because we are going to reveal an absolutely massive goal that we're going to have for the coming next few years. You're not going to want to miss it. We've been working on it for months. So, we'll unveil that the next full podcast right here on the American Family Radio Network. Don't miss it. And obviously, those who listen on the American Family Radio Network will hear it. But if you don't listen on the American Family Radio Network, you know that this is a podcast, and we also have a midweek podcast. This one usually drops Friday afternoon, and the midweek drops on Tuesday afternoon. So, check all that out.

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Make sure you don't miss next week. I'm thankful for all the support we've had so many years here at crossexamined.org. But we're really about to ramp things up. So, tune in next week for a huge announcement.

All right, I'm talking to my friend Dr. Tim Chaffey. We're talking about Noah's Ark. And before we cover those last few questions we had on it, Tim, I know some of our listeners are probably thinking, oh, the elephant in the room. You know, Tim works with Ken Ham, and Ken Ham is a young Earther. And Frank, you're not a young Earther. You're more agnostic. You think the evidence is greater that the Earth is old? And is this a big divide? In my mind, it's not because I think that Christians can disagree over that issue and still be saved. And Tim, I think you and Ken Ham would agree, correct?

TIM:

Yeah, we think it's an important issue because ultimately, for us, it comes down to a biblical authority issue. That's really our emphasis. What does the Bible say? And we believe that is what it teaches. We understand some people don't come to the same conclusion. But ultimately, one's salvation is not contingent upon what somebody believes about Genesis and how long it took God to make everything. And we've stressed that over, and over, and over, and over again. There's so many times where I hear people say, well, Ken said you have to be young Earth to be saved, and he's never taught that. And I don't teach that. But I know there are some people who are passionate about the subject. So, maybe it comes across that way.

And I would just remind people who are on the other side, and people who are on the young Earth side as well. You look at Paul's example in Philippians 1 where he talks about how some people preach the Gospel out of envy and strife. Some people do it out of selfish ambition. I'm not trying to make any accusations about anybody here. But some do it out of love. Either way, Paul rejoiced because the Gospel is preached. And we can be grateful that we are serving the same God and none of us are perfect. We are doing the best we can and proclaiming the truth of Scripture and the Gospel, and we should unite on the Gospel, and seek to reach this lost and dying world.

FRANK:

Yeah, that's right. We need to do that. So, ladies and gentlemen, I know Ken Ham is very passionate about the age of the Earth. But despite what you may think, he does not think you have to hold a young Earth view in order to be saved. So, just remember that. And don't let that, if you disagree with that conclusion, to discredit or have you overlook his fine work, and Tim's fine work, and other people at Answers in Genesis, their fine work, especially with regard to the Ark Encounter. It's very well done. And I don't think you're going to be disappointed. I think you'll be actually very encouraged, and very intrigued, and enlightened when you go to the Ark Encounter.

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So, go to ArkEncounter.com to learn more about this. And Tim, I think the same is true because there are some Christians who make the biblical case that the flood was regional. It took everybody out, but it didn't cover the whole Earth. And your view is that it covered the whole Earth. Same kind of thing, right? It's not an essential of the faith, quite obviously.

TIM:

Yeah, it's not an essential to salvation. I would say it would be more about consistency of hermeneutic and how we understand the Bible, and also consistency of the biblical message throughout. But it's not something that we split the church over, and excommunicate people over. That's not one of those issues.

FRANK:

Let me ask you the moral question. And this is always brought up particularly by atheists. Of course, they have no moral standard by which to judge any of this, but they're stealing a standard from God and claiming God is somehow immoral. But they do that with the Canaanites. They do that with what they perceive as slavery in the Old Testament, even though it's not really slavery as we understand it. And they do it when it comes to God wiping everybody out in the flood. Why would God do such a thing? And why would he do it drowning? Why not just kill them instantaneously? What's your view on that?

TIM:

Yeah, that's a good question. It's one that somebody asked me the day that the Ark opened. We had a group of about 80 to 100 protesters, like the American Humanist Association. Their guys were there. And one of them asked me that question. Meanwhile, he's wearing a shirt that's promoting abortion.

FRANK:

He thinks it's a moral right, doesn't he? He thinks it's a moral right to kill people.

TIM:

Exactly. It's fine to murder this kid, but it's wrong for God to murder. And he was asking about this act of genocide, God wiping out. And I said, it's not genocide. Genocide is when you single out a group of people. God didn't single out a group of people. It was all people except for the eight people on the ark. It was judgment. And He's the creator. He's the creator of life, so He have the right to take life. But He was also patient. You know, Peter talks about how God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. He gives people time to turn from that. And so, the question about why a flood? Why not just take them out in their sleep? Well, maybe two reasons that I can think of.

One would be, you know, if you take somebody out in their sleep, and they had no hint or no indication that their life was about to end when they laid down that night, there's no opportunity for them to turn to God in the last moment. Whereas a flood, if you see or hear the floodwaters rushing in and you know you're done for within the next few seconds, that's enough time to be

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like the thief on the cross and cry out. And so, there's an opportunity for forgiveness right there. And the other thing is a flood leaves evidence. It's a reminder that God judges sin, and you can go and look in the Grand Canyon, like I was this last week, and you can see layer upon layer upon layer of rock with fossils buried in them. And it's a constant reminder that God is serious about sin. He judged this world once before, and He's going to do it again someday. And just as He provided a means of physical safety for Noah and his family in the ark, He's provided a means of eternal salvation from our sin and eternal punishment apart from Him in the lake of fire. He's provided salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, and He offers that to all.

FRANK:

Ladies and gentlemen, if God exists, and He does, and if Christianity is true, and it is, people don't really die. They just change location. They go from this life to the next life. And it's up to God when that happens. And I think, as you just pointed out Tim, people don't understand that judgment and justice are an attribute of God's nature. If He was not just and He didn't punish sin at some point, then He really wouldn't be worth worshiping. It would be like somebody who continuously allows someone to be abused and never brings that person to justice ever. That wouldn't be a just judge or a just person. There has to be justice done at some point. And it's up to God to know when that is.

Now, we're speculating here a little bit as to why God, you know, killed in that manner. But I think you're right. It does give people an opportunity to repent, and it does leave evidence, Tim. Those are good insights. They seem like they're certainly plausible reasons why God would have done it that way. But we are speculating to a certain point. I've got to clear up one thing too, Tim, because this is misinformation in the media. Some say that Kentucky tax dollars were used to build the ark. Is that true?

TIM:

No, it's not true. Yeah, the protesters are holding up signs for that, too. And yeah, we hear it all the time from the media. And they still report it that way sometimes. But no, it's not true. There was not a single dime of tax money or tax dollars from Kentucky used to build the ark. What that was in reference to was a tourism tax rebate that had to do with, once we were open for a whole year if we met certain standards, we could receive a rebate on part of the sales tax that we had already paid in. So, there's no money going to the ark until after it had been open for a year. And then that's only a rebate of money that had already been paid in. So, it was bringing more money into Kentucky. It's not taking money away from Kentucky.

FRANK:

Oh, leave it to the media to muddy those waters up, huh?

TIM:

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FRANK:

Pun intended. Come on. That's just crazy. Now, what are some of the reactions you get when people go through this, Tim? I mean, you've seen it. You've been there for several years.

TIM:

Yeah. You know, a lot of people are amazed at how big it is. It's hard to fathom that when you just read it. Some people really appreciate how it helped make the Bible come alive for them, to picture how this could have been done, and to see how God provided for Noah and his family. So, they're amazed at that. My favorite reaction is the people who have gotten saved, who have given their lives to the Lord as a result of going through there and being convicted of their sin and responding to the Gospel in faith. And I've heard several testimonies, including one just this last week while I was in the Grand Canyon.

One of the women that was hiking with us, she said that one of her friends that she brought through there did that. And so, I praise God for that. I mean, that's ultimately why we built the ark. It wasn't just to have this really cool building in Williamstown, Kentucky, even though it's pretty cool. And it isn't just to answer those skeptical questions, even though that's an important thing to do and to show the feasibility of this and the reliability of Scripture. All those things are really important. But if we're not pointing people to our creator and savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, then we're not doing our job. And so, ultimately that's why we built the ark. And it's great to see the Lord changing lives and bringing people to Him through that.

FRANK:

Yeah, the whole world was saved through an ark. And now the whole world is saved through a savior, Jesus. So, the ark was, in some ways, a type of Christ. Not technically, but you can think about it that way. It saved people from the judgment of sin. And Jesus, of course, saves people from the judgment of sin as well. He not only forgives our sins, but He gives us His righteousness. And He proved it by rising from the dead. In fact, Tim, I was watching a presentation you did maybe nine or ten years ago, about how people often leave out the Resurrection from the Gospel presentation.

TIM:

Yeah, I call that another whole Gospel. And it's kind of shocking to me how many times people do that. We get on my favorite subject, the resurrection, we're going to be here awhile. But it's so important. I think Christians think of it as the cherry on the sundae, or we do this on one Sunday, a year. No, look at what the Apostles did when they went around preaching throughout the book of Acts. Every message was about the Resurrection. They focused on it. There's no reason for Christians to walk around, defeated or depressed. It's victory, and it's our hope. Our savior conquered the grave. And when you understand that, and you look at the change of the lives of the disciples, that's how we should be living. We share that same enthusiasm, that same confidence in proclaiming the Gospel wherever we go.

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FRANK:

That's right. That's Dr. Tim Chaffey. Tim, thanks for being on the show. And thanks for your great work at the Ark Encounter.

TIM:

Hey, Frank, thanks so much for having me. Thanks for all your kind words, as well. I appreciate it.

FRANK:

ArkEncounter.com. And also check out the book, ladies and gentlemen. 'Inside Noah's Ark: Why it Worked', by Tim Chaffey and Laura Welch. See you next week. Don't miss it. God bless.

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