

Transcript 111

Shea Houdmann

Welcome to the Got Questions podcast. On today's episode I've got a special guest with me. Nick Liguori. The author of *Echoes of Ararat*, and this book is something that's really interested in me because for so many years as a dedicated creationist, I've heard that all around the world there are other cultures who have flood accounts in their mythology or even other parts from early chapters of Genesis that they closely matched to varying degrees with what the Bible tells. I've always found that very interesting, and I found it to be tremendous evidence for the biblical flood accounts. So when I heard those was this book *Echoes Of Ararat* a collection over 300 flood legends from just North and South America. This is a conversation I definitely wanted to have.

Shea Houdmann

So nick. Welcome to the show.

Nick Liguori

Thank you for having me Shea.

Shea Houdmann

So Nick, in your research, in researching all these, what's maybe, we have the biblical flood account, is there anything that seems to be like universally held in all the different flood accounts from myths, legends, other cultures that you've run across, and you think that's everyone seems to have?

Nick Liguori

Well, we've known about the existence of these flood traditions and histories, we're counting the flood for a long time. Josephus refers to them. He says that the writers or barbarian histories make mention this blood in this park. So the findings all over the world. They they match Genesis account in so many specifics and it will vary from one part of the world to another, but they'll they'll remember for example, the God sending a global flood in judgment for man's sin or warning a prophet, or an old man and telling him, build a great canoe. Save your family and the animals and the construction of this great boat. The the coming flood drowning all mankind and then that great canoe, they'll say, landing on a high mountain. Then the old man sending a pair of birds to search for a sign is the flood coming to an end. They remember the Raven. They remember the dove. They remember the dove returning with something in its mouth. Not now they'll change what it returned to instead of an olive leaf they'll say It was a blade of grass or a branch. But we find some these elements that specifically match Genesis even coming down and re populating the Earth and a rainbow. Even the Tower Babel event happening afterward, so really it's the type of evidence that wow. If Genesis is true, this is exactly what we'd expect to find all over the world. If Genesis is not true, this is the last thing we accept to find.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah, correct me if I'm wrong, but I I would guess aside from the account of Noah in the family in Genesis Chapter 6-8, by the second most famous one would be the Epic of Gilgamesh, but most people have heard of that and know the bits and pieces that story. Obviously each tradition or myth or legend

has its own cultural uniqueness to it and obviously to us we would believe that the all these exist because it actually happened and then over the course of thousands of years each culture as they're passing on the their stories mostly about oral tradition for centuries, if not millennia, different things crept in the story and parts of the story were lost, but the idea that there was a global flood in response to humanity, sin, and the God selected one family by which to save humanity. That just seems so universal that I think it's evidence that it points back to something that actually happened,

Shea Houdmann

and especially when most people don't think about northern. South America is also having these flood traditions, but that's powerful evidence is clearly for thousands of years. There's the First Nation people in northern South America were widely separated from anyone who could have communicated these stories to them. I think to me that's powerful evidence and maybe maybe my second question to you. What's something that in your research like what surprised you the most? Maybe an aspect of the story that really surprised you that it's maintained itself so well.

Nick Liguori

Well, it is impressive how well these tribes have preserved these traditions. Many of them don't have writing and they did to varying degrees some that are preserved in others, but to see such similar points to the Genesis flood account, whether it's the the old man being forewarned and told to build a great canoe, or the Raven and the dove that. That the dove keeps coming up and it returning with something or they'll change it to maybe a Beaver or a different bird, but the signature of the Genesis flood is there clearly matching.

Nick Liguori

I've been, so I've. Been blown away I guess by the volume of these I I didn't expect to find so many and when I got started I didn't know how strong the evidence would be. Maybe it wouldn't be there, but you know, Paul says we can do nothing against the truth for only for the truth. So if something is true as we investigate it, we're going to find confirmation. It's going to kind of hold up. We're going to find evidence is something that lie it's going to fall apart for examination so. You know, I thought maybe I'll find 75-80 traditions but here we are over 300 from the Americas and the rest of the world promises to have just as many.

Nick Liguori

I think one thing that's been interesting to me is to see many of these tribes have traditions where, well, they had an annual memorial of a flood. They would gather with other neighboring tribes and offer sacrifices to they say, the greatest spirit, thanking him for a lot of their ancestors to survive the flood and really showing it all, and that this was something seared into their memory.

Nick Liguori

And so we find that, for example, in in the Northeast, the tribes of New York had an annual ceremony. The Manden tribe. Of Sioux language families. Some others of the Sioux language family and in the Northern Great Plains and the Midwest have these annual commemorations for the flood and then complete with memory of specific things like the dove, the all the great Canoe, some of them say that

the Ark landed farther West in Texas and other places. California refining his annual commemoration. So it's really interesting.

Shea Houdmann

Let me ask you like kind of an apologetics related question. In doing some research and preparing for this interview and going through your book some, I ran across some who are arguing that, so with this like Native American First Nation for the longest time did not have anything written, they have now been so exposed to Christian missionaries for hundreds of years that these flood accounts. There's no record of them predating Christian missionaries. So what has actually happened? Christians came, shared the gospel, the Biblical story and the Native Americans, then adapted that into their own mythology, but it actually didn't predate Christian missionaries. How do you respond to that argument?

Nick Liguori

Yeah, that's a popular objection and it just doesn't hold up. That's the narrative that's out there. But that narrative doesn't fit the data these the sources are too early. Or too many of them. They predate not only Christian missionary and European arrival, but they predate Christ even as we see with Josephus setting this ancient material going back in the BC era ancient, we have ancient rock carvings. We have ancient writings referring to flood from from the Grand Canyon, he checked block carbons in Venezuela. Well, that that Amon acts with intent. Rock carvings comparing blood.

Nick Liguori

If missionaries are actually two in the cause of these blood counts, why don't we also find traditions of famous events from the Bible like virgin birth, like the Red Sea crossing, like the cross and the resurrection of Christ? Why's it only Genesis in these events? Creation, gardening of Eden, tower of Babel? These events in Genesis one through 11 that they have memory of of. So the that that argument cannot account for with the quality and the the antiquity of of the data and which that was a major reason why I wrote this book. But the arguments been around too long and it it doesn't fit the data and here's the evidence and the source is too good.

Nick Liguori

We also have signs of the genuineness of these traditions. They they have clear native material things consistent with their core beliefs and and then when we compare traditions within a language only, for example within the Coastal Salish language family of the northwest or the Algonquian language, and they're consistent, and so if they're consistent in their flood traditions, that makes it exponentially more difficult for this to have been product with Christian influence.

Shea Houdmann

No, I I remember we couple who used to be missionaries to Papua New Guinea, attended our church for awhile and there are members of our small group and just loved listening to him talk about his experience and one of the things he talked about is that as they were like getting to know the tribe they were with and he he went in fully expecting them to have a flood as part of their mythology and this particular actually didn't, so he'll ask will tell me more about basically your creation story and this is before he'd have any opportunity to share really anything over the Bible with them. And while they did not have a flood account, they described something that was almost identical to the Tower of Babel

account to him. So no flood account, but they definitely had a Tower of Babel, where the gods came down confused the languages to prevent humanity from doing something that God or gods didn't want them to do, and he was just blown away by how similar it was for this extremely remote tribes that had no other human contact for thousands of years. And yet they basically have the biblical Tower of Babel account so you go into that a little bit in in Echoes of Ararat.

Shea Houdmann

I know it's primarily about the flood, but we need a little data on how often is our other aspects of the Genesis creation account also included? Is it just the flood primarily or do they have a lot of garden of Eden or Tower of Babel stories that incorporate it as well?

Nick Liguori

Yeah, the flood is the most widely preserved one, but we definitely find memories of the Garden of Eden, of Creation, of Tower of Babel. Even Cain and Abel, his brother quarreling. And then one kills the other and and I'll be writing on New Guinea and the Pacific in in my future second volume. We we have found several flood traditions from New Guinea and, and that is very true that in some places we don't find the flood. But then we find the Garden of Eden, a memory of that event. Or it's the tower of Babel. Different areas will have preserved a particular element that are in certain parts of the Americas they sort of forgot that the art that they remember amount that they remembered Noah's Raven and dove or another part they'll forget the raven and dove, but they'll have very good memory of the great canoe.

Nick Liguori

In the southeast United States we have a very persistent tradition of the Tower of Babel. Also in Canada we find a lot of tower Babel accounts. In the Pacific we we find a very persistent memory of creation and of creation of Adam and Eve and the woman from a rib of the man. So because of like you mentioned, oral preservation of these accounts, certain certain details were lost, but there is that there's a core of consistency with Genesis, which is I think impossible to explain other than this being a true record that we have in Genesis.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah, there were several of the different accounts in your in Echoes Of Ararat that intrigued me. Give our audience a couple of ones that you found particularly interesting as you're doing your research and putting together by a couple of the from North or South America that you're like? Wow, tha blew you away with how accurate or close to the Bible, the accounts were.

Nick Liguori

Yeah, and I I remember when I was reading, I think it was the Cherokee tribe that I'm reading there the traditions and I'm like what is it that sounded just like the Genesis flood, what is that doing in the Cherokee nation's history? Let me take my glasses off and reread that. This no that that's the Genesis. What's the Genesis Flood doing in the Cherokee Nation 's history? Now find that in Apache Nation and all these trying to as I was going back to the original sources because I really wanted to have. I wanted to know how strong is the evidence. And so that requires going back to the original sources, documenting looking at the quality of those sources.

Nick Liguori

One of my favorite to be the Wualified tribe, though of northern Arizona they have like I mentioned these ancient rock carvings, long predating European arrival, that recount with flood. And it it shows 8 survivors and then in their tradition they say that rains fell on the earth for 45 days. That the waters wiped out all people with the lone exception of an old man atop Spirit Mountain. And then they say that bird was sent out and on the second flight it returned with grass in its beak to inform the man that the flood was final point to an end. I like the the Palletin tribe. Close to home for me. I'm in Virginia. Yeah, they they say that long ago there was an ancient flood in seven or eight people survived in the great canoe. The the Mandan tribe, they remember in their annual memorial of the flood, one of their elders acted out the role of new monk, Monk enough. Who was Noah and he he came and said that he was the only man that survived flood, he landed the great canoe on a mountain farther West. They they refer to the turtledove as returning with a Willow branch in it beak.

Nick Liguori

I've been very amazed by the Mexican Nations, Aztecs and the Toltecs and many minor tribes of Mexico that they many of them have these ancient paintings commemorating flood and even memory of Tower Babel and so we find this similar things in South America. It's interesting for me also to see some of the variations that they remember there was a flood. They remember there was a garden of Eden. There was a woman and something taken from a tree, but they kind of mix it up and so they'll say that there was a serpent, that tempted a woman, and then flooding ensued, or some fruit was taken from a tree and then a flooding ensued.

Nick Liguori

And so it's fascinating how the memory of these different events is there, and at first it puzzled me but then I saw that if you remember the garden of Eden two, they remember creation and sometimes they mix it up. But again, the Genesis account it really stands apart as it has all the elements to explain all these flood traditions that we find all over the world. It truly is superior and I don't believe that Noah passed down a record of the flood and Moses used it to write Genesis.

Shea Houdmann

Well, it's most interesting to me is to think that for hundreds if not thousands of years these were entirely passed down through oral tradition, or almost entirely. I mean, we've all played the telephone game where you whisper something in someone's ear, and by the time it gets to the 7th or 8th person, it's barely even resembles the original story. Yet, here we have stuff being passed down over hundreds and hundreds of years, and yet it maintaining the essential details of an account that we we believe, based on the Bible actually happened and to me that's the sign of God preserving this knowledge because it's an important foundation for them to later understand God's plan of salvation. And so maybe let's go into the the Bible mythology available. Why do you think it's so important for us to believe in the Noah flood account, and why do you think God preserved that account so universally in different cultures around the world.

Nick Liguori

Yeah, Paul says in Acts 14 that God has not left himself about witness to any nation. And I believe this part of it. You see Paul even studying that the witness that God left in Athens at this altar quoting some other poet. And seeing that God has left you a witness, therefore here's the Gospel. And here's Jesus, so it plays a role in confirming the gospel. I think that in terms of what does it matter? Because, and I understand the question, it's like what does it matter if it was truly a global flood and it's not just about whether it's not about the meteorology, it's it, it actually is very significant in terms of but the flood gets to the actually the integrity of Scripture and the Gospel because if we if we lose the Genesis, but if it was just a myth or a local flood, then we're introducing myth into Genesis and we're probably going to end up with myth in if we have myth in Genesis 6 through 9, we'll get out myth in Genesis 3 and also if we don't have a global flood, we don't have a geological event that can account for the fossils that show death, disease, decay, carnivory in the lowest layers. Now the flood can account for that, but if we don't have that, then we're left with a secular view, and we're left with actually, we left the death before sin and so if we lose the global flood, it matters, we're going to lose Adam, we're going to lose the Garden of Eden. We're going to lose Paul.

Nick Liguori

Paul in Romans 5 predicates with arguments for why Jesus is Savior of the world, on Adam and all of the following sites or refers to Adam nine times in Romans 5, he refers to it in first Corinthians 15. So Terry Mortensen said very well if if we have a mythical flood and we're going to have a mythical Adam. We're going to have a mythical garment eating a mythical mythical Paul. A mythical Jesus offering a mythical salvation in a mythical.

Nick Liguori

But if Genesis if the flood is true then we have a true flood. We have a true Adam. A true gardening of Eden. A true fall. A true introduction of sin, death and God's judgment and flood tested out God's judgment. We have a true deep personal need for a Savior, for eternal life or atonement for our sins and then we have a true Jesus. Attested by prophecy and by the eyewitness testimony, a true Savior offering such true hope and true eternal life. So that's why it matters. There's other reasons but but the integrity of the Gospels are most important.

Shea Houdmann

Yeah, well said well said so I know we talked a little bit before that you have a second volume that kind of Echoes Ararat 2, where you're kind of exploring the different flood traditions from other parts of the world. Hopefully come out within the next few years, so look forward to that one as well, maybe you can give it a sneak preview. What's what's a couple of flood accounts that you found in other parts of the world that you found particularly interesting?

Nick Liguori

I mentioned that in the Pacific, specifically the Polynesian islands, there is a well preserved memory of creation of Adam and Eve, even as far as Easter Island, the most remote island world. I've been amazed by China. China has a a very well preserved memory of not only the flood, but especially creation in the garden of Eden, that'll be coming forth.

Nick Liguori

I've been amazed that Vietnam. Every tribe from Vietnam has a memory of what. Taiwan I'm working off by 1 right now. Again specific you see the signature of the Genesis flood on these these brides of accounts and so I think this has value for missionaries to to see that we we have something. Their history, their nation's history has a witness to the Bible that that can open hearts and minds to the message of Jesus in the way that we see Paul doing in Acts 14:17.

Shea Houdmann

So Nick, this has been a amazing discussion and again will include links to where you can learn more about Nick in his research. And of course, where you can purchase Echoes of Ararat. It's an intriguing read and Nick let me just thank you for all the research you've done. I know it's been a lot of work, so it's fascinating work, but I'm I'm in the sense of glad God gave you this assignment rather than me, but I can't imagine the amount of time spent putting all these accounts together and then compiling in a book in the way he did so. Thank you for that and thank you for your time today. It's been a very interesting discussion.

Nick Liguori

Thank you very much Shea. I thank you for everything that you do at Got Questions.

Shea Houdmann

So it's been the Got Questions podcast with Nicola Liguori, the author of Echoes of Ararat. Got questions? The Bible has answers. We'll help you find them.