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**GENESIS 6-9: THEOLOGICAL THEMES AND THEIR  
EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

The narrative of the Genesis Flood in Gen. 6-9 has been an inexhaustible source of study and teaching for theologians, scientists, and educators. Its plot is very simple according to the text. When the wickedness of human beings whom God created increased, God gave them a period of grace, one hundred and twenty years. He destroyed them by a worldwide catastrophic flood, but He protected Noah and his family, His faithful people.<sup>1</sup> In His eschatological discourses in the Gospels, Jesus used this narrative as a warning for future generations.<sup>2</sup> The plot, and Jesus' reference to the Flood, produce some important theological themes: the period of grace, the sovereignty and power of God, the protection of God's faithful people, and a warning for the future.

This study attempts to integrate faith and learning using the emerging theological themes in Genesis 6-9. To achieve this end, presentation of the biblical references for given themes, development of theological themes, and their implications for education will be explored in the paper.

Our methodology will be descriptive in nature. While questions of Flood narrative authorship, comparison between the biblical account and the ancient Near East documents,<sup>3</sup> and chronology are important, their scope makes their inclusion in this paper impossible.<sup>4</sup>

## II. GENESIS 6-9: THEOLOGICAL THEMES AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

To form a foundation for the integration of faith and learning, let us turn first to the subject of the historicity and universality of the Flood. This is essential for true education cannot be established on the basis of fiction or a myth. Many Christian theologians deny the historical and universal nature of the Flood due to modern scientific influence.<sup>5</sup> But the textual evidence supports the historicity and universality of the biblical Flood.

The historical nature of the flood narrative is understood by the Hebrew technical term *toledoth*, "generation." It is the derivative of the verb *yālad*, "to give birth to, to bear." The term occurs 13 times in Genesis,<sup>6</sup> and at the end of eleven sections of narrative material it occurs.<sup>7</sup> The frequent occurring expression "these are the generations of" points to the concept of progenitor and progeny. It offers a framework for looking at Genesis by connecting each section of the book within a genealogical 'envelope'. 'When the eleven narrative sections are assembled in general chronological order, they furnish a connected history of life from the time of its origin to the period of Joseph.'<sup>8</sup> The references of Abraham and his descendants in this formula ascribe historicity to the narratives of the Creation, the Fall, and the Flood in the same manner as the other genealogical accounts in Genesis 11-50.<sup>9</sup> The Flood belongs to the "toledoth of Noah" (6:9-10:1). "The Flood story purports to be history. It deals with a definite incident in man's experience, with the adventures of an individual human being whose name and genealogy are on record."<sup>10</sup>

Hasel and Davidson treat the universality of the Flood with significant insight. Hasel focuses on the "all-inclusive terminology" such as "earth," "the face of all the earth," "face of the ground," "all flesh," "every living thing," and "under the whole heaven," "all flesh," and "*mabbûl* (Flood). From contextual and syntactical study, it becomes clear that the above terms and phrases support the idea of universal Flood in Genesis.<sup>11</sup> Davidson presents most of Hasel's all-inclusive terminology in Gen. 6-9 from the perspective of Creation. They echo "their counterparts in the worldwide creation account of Genesis 1 and 2," thus they need to be understood as indicators of a universal Flood.<sup>12</sup> Davidson also emphasizes theological significance of the universal Flood. It is concerned with the universal scope of the plan of salvation. "The trajectory of major themes in Genesis 1-11 - Creation, Fall, plan of

redemption, and spread of sin, is universal in scope and calls for a corresponding universal judgment... the Fall of humanity in Adam and Eve led to the sinful condition of the entire human race (*hâ'ādâm*), not just the inhabitants of Mesopotamia (see Genesis 6:5, 11; Romans 3:19; 5:12)."<sup>13</sup>

The historical and universal nature of the Flood has deep impact for the development of authentic integration of faith and learning.

#### **A. Period of grace**

Genesis Flood narrative begins with a description of the sinful condition of the world (Gen. 6:1-6, 11-13) and God's offer of a period of grace: "My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years" (Gen. 6:3). Cassuto<sup>14</sup> and Wenham's<sup>15</sup> suggestion that the period indicates the life span of human beings cannot be accepted, because postdiluvian patriarchs lived longer than one hundred and twenty- years. It is more reasonable to accept the period as a period of grace.<sup>16</sup>

(1) **Biblical References:** A period of grace is found in other narratives of the Bible. A four hundred-year period was given to the Canaanites before the people of Israel occupied the land of Canaan (15:13, 16. Cf. Exod. 12:40, 41), a period of forty-day to the people of Nineveh by the prophet Jonah before the city was punished (Jon. 3:4).<sup>17</sup> and the seventy weeks of prophetic time to Israel concluding with their rejection of Christ and His followers (Dan. 9:24). The longest prophetic period of two thousand and three hundred days indicates that we are living in a period of grace in the last days (Dan. 8:14).<sup>18</sup> These periods of grace show the love and justice of God, two important aspects of God's nature in dealing with human beings.

(2) **The Love of God:** Every scene of God's judgment in Gen. 1-11 shows God's love toward sinner(s). Adam and Eve, the first parents of all human beings, had close fellowship with God and received instruction concerning the condition of their existence before the Fall.<sup>19</sup> Cain, the first murderer, enjoyed divine grace, but he still needed to heed God's warning to lead a righteous life (4:6-7). The builders of the tower of Babel were fully aware of a Noahic covenant, and had every reason to believe in God's love (11:1-4).<sup>20</sup> All of them were given adequate opportunity to become acquainted with God's will and to accept it though no specific period of time was given in these last examples.

The antediluvians were given a specific period of time, i.e. a hundred and twenty years. This was a grace period for the

sinners to repent. The idea of a probationary period was held from the early times of Judaism. "A reprieve will be given to them" (Targum Onkelos). "Behold, I have given you the space of a hundred and twenty years [hoping that] perhaps they might do repentance and they did not do [it]" (Targum Neophyti I).<sup>21</sup> The antediluvians were to be responsible for their way living after having sufficient times and opportunity to harmonize themselves to God's will.

God's love is displayed in His strivings with mankind. First, God made provision for man's salvation. Noah had to build an ark according to the divine pattern (6:14-16). Noah's building project was remarkable for the antediluvians who had had no rain yet (2:6).<sup>22</sup> It was also an audio-visual teaching method. Antediluvians must have been deeply impressed by Noah's unusual message of action. They had time to think over its serious significance for their destiny. They could choose life. Second, God worked for the saving of souls in cooperation with his human instruments. God's Spirit strove with sinners to convict them of their sins and to repent (6:3).<sup>23</sup> God did not leave Noah alone to work. Jesus Christ (through the Holy Spirit) and Noah worked together (1 Pet. 3:19, 20; Heb. 11:7). The period of grace was filled with God's efforts to save sinners. Third, God suffered much, but He endured it with deep compassion. We find that "He 'repents' - He is sorry, moved to pity, having compassion, suffering grief (Gen. 6:6). God takes up humanity's pain and anguish (Gen. 6:6; cf. 3:16-17)."<sup>24</sup> God neither acts arbitrarily upon sinners, nor is ignorant of the acts of sinners. He was not hasty in punishing them. We cannot even find a word for divine anger in the narrative. He acted rationally not losing His temper.<sup>25</sup> The period of grace was the time when God tasted the sorrow of sin with deep compassion for the sinners. Fourth, God waited for an extended period of time longing for sinners' repentance. In the context of the long-suffering nature of God, Peter refers to the shortness of time and a consciousness of God who exhorts sinners to repent in anticipation of the Second Coming: "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day...He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:8, 9). It was a waiting time for God, a time filled with His desire to see sinners return to Him. From God's side, this one hundred and twenty-year period was not merely an accumulation of moments that passed, but was the ground of God's activity to save sinners. It was a history of salvation.

**(3) The Justice of God:** The period of grace clearly shows that there is a limit to God's patience.<sup>26</sup> God's patience does

not continue forever. When the time was over, the antediluvians were destroyed by flood. Likewise, the wicked Canaanites were destroyed by the conquest of Israel, and the stubborn Jewish nation by the power of the Romans (thus ceasing to be God's chosen people as the result of rejecting Jesus Christ). Each was given a sufficient period of time in which they could develop their own character, and show their true nature. When they proved they were unfit, punishment came at the close of the probation.

It is to be noted that the term "end" was used in connection with the fullness of violence. "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth" (6:13, NASB). The Hebrew word *qēts*, "end," refers to the end of a period of time (Num. 13:25),<sup>27</sup> and "is used in a context of judgment."<sup>28</sup> In its inner relationship it points to the final judgment of God.<sup>29</sup> The end of the period is the time of God's judgment when God's justice is advocated and maintained. Creation is the basis of judgment (6:6,7). Antediluvians were punished for corrupting their ways, and its outward expression was violence (6:12). Violence is a "revolt against the order of creation, a rejection of the life of obedience natural to a created being"<sup>30</sup> The connection between judgment and creation emphasizes the importance of the law that was inherently given to humankind at the Creation.

The Flood is a precursory paradigm of the Exile. "According to the Genesis story, the prerequisites of human existence are laws." Once they are broken the land is polluted. God cleansed the world, or the land through Flood and Exile. "It was .. not intended to be a final destruction of the people. The prophesies of doom are frequently accompanied by mention of the remnant which is to be saved and restored to the land."<sup>31</sup>

**Educational implications:** At the beginning of their school life, all students are necessarily introduced to the educational philosophy, regulations, and rules of the school. They need to know what is expected of them and have a chance to adapt their life to the school program. Once a disciplinary situation is created, that process needs to be handled in a redemptive way. The following factors are implications derived from the theme of a period of grace.

(1) **Display the love of God:** Faculty members need to cooperate with God, and use the disciplinary situation for the salvation of the student. The primary purpose of discipline is redemptive, and the faculty members need to have the attitude of Christian love, and have deep compassion for the student. Teachers, friends of the student, and his/her parents need to be united in helping the troubled student.

Disciplinary situations are an opportunity to appeal to the heart of the student, and encourage the person to improve. To achieve this end teachers need to be patient allowing sufficient time for the student to improve.

As God himself "saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become" (6:5), so the faculty members who are dealing with a student in trouble need to know the truth. Their judgments should not be based on rumors or testimony of other people alone. At least one committee member needs to have first-hand information. They need to be cautious in making a final decision. It is not recommendable to make decisions when they are angry or upset, for it prevents them from consider all factors involved.

**(2) Consider the Justice of God:** Faculty members of the school need to do their best to maintain the integrity of the Adventist standards in their school. To do this, all the students need to understand the Christian world-view under which the school operates and the significance this perspective plays in the organization's goals. When it becomes clear that some rules cannot be disregarded, there will then be a foundation upon which to place this regulation. When a disciplinary situation arises, hesitation to solve the situation may prove more harmful than helpful or merciful however. That is why the authority of the school needs to be resolute in discipline, and students need to know that the tolerance/grace of their school does have its limits.

It is wise to consider the prior cases which are similar in nature in order to make a fair decision. Discipline is not to be made in partial or discriminating ways. Any deviation from fairness will create complaints and confusion in school.

While achieving justice, schools need to consider Christian love. When discipline is administered to a student, the discipline committee members need to strive towards restoration, if possible. The student is not to be condemned or to feel that he/she is outcast from God.

#### **B. The Sovereignty and Power of God**

The concepts of the sovereignty and the power of God are closely related each other in Creation. They are necessarily combined. A sovereign god lacking power is only an embarrassed being not knowing what to do about the wickedness of the people. A powerful god without sovereignty is only an arbitrary gangster who does not have any legitimate personal loving relationship with us. The integration of both sovereignty and power is well demonstrated in the Flood.

**(1) Biblical References:** In the Flood narrative the prominent figure is God. God is the cause of the falling rain. God is the sovereign King and Judge. As King and Judge, God investigated the condition of the whole earth (6:5, 11-12), the realm of His rule, handed down the verdict that He would destroy the earth because of its corruption and violence (6:7, 13), and executed the sentence. The execution was accomplished by causing the rain to fall (7:11-12, 17-20, 24) and bursting forth all the springs of the great deep (7:11), thus destroying all flesh outside the ark (7:21-23), though provision had been made for the preservation of His faithful people (6:8-10, 14-22; 7:1, 5-7, 13, 23; 8:1, 4) and representatives of the animal world (6:19-22; 7:2-3, 8-9, 14-16, 23; 8:1, 4). God gave the world a new beginning after the Flood. He made the earth inhabitable once again by the display of His creative power (8:2-3, 5, 13-15), ushered the remnant out (8:15-19), and introduced a new world order comparable with the first creation (8:21-22; 9:1-7). God's relationship to human being was renewed through the covenant. God is still our Creator and will rule His creation forever (9:8-17).

**(2) The Sovereignty and Power of God.** The narrative demonstrates God's sovereignty and power over human beings and nature.

a. **Human Beings.** Human beings have nothing to claim for their merit in creation. They owe their being totally to God. Their formation from the dust as living beings,<sup>32</sup> their origin as the ones created in the image of God (1:26, 27), their blessings (1:28), work, food (1:28, 29; 2:5, 15), family life (2:21-25), and rulership over the creatures (1:26, 28; 2:19, 20) came only from God. The tree of life and the forbidden tree were reminders for them of their finite nature while living under God's sovereignty and infinite power (2:9, 16-17).

The anthropopathism, i.e., the ascription to God of human emotions, in Genesis 6:6 ('repented,' 'grieved') shows "a personal God who is actively involved in the lives of His creatures."<sup>33</sup> Genesis 3-11 shows that God exerted His sovereignty and power by presiding over the process of the judgment, i.e., the investigation, sentence, and execution of judgment. He was not a bystander simply observing the sin of human beings. He punished those sin, whether they were by nature "against God" (Adam and Eve, Gen. 3), "against man" (Cain, Gen. 4), "against natural order" (Flood, Gen. 6-9), or "against culture" (Tower of Babel, Gen. 11).<sup>34</sup>

The sovereignty and power of God mean salvation for the righteous, and death for the unrighteous. When there was a supernatural flood, the sovereign God, in His grace, kept all His people and representative living creatures safe and

destroyed all the sinners and the breathing animals on the ground.<sup>35</sup>

God's continued sovereignty after the Fall is acknowledged by the sacrifice of Noah, and God's arrangement concerning the natural order, and the Noahic covenant. God is still our sovereign, omnipotent King and Savior.

**b. Nature.** Natural elements were used to execute God's judgment. *Mabbul*, a Hebrew technical term used exclusively for the world-wide flood, means "the heavenly ocean" that caused "a catastrophe" involving the "destruction of the entire cosmic system ... The two halves of the chaotic primeval sea separated - the one up, the other below - by God's creative government (ch. 1:7-9) are again united."<sup>36</sup> It is "a cosmic catastrophe that is actually the undoing of creation."<sup>37</sup> For the nature of the source of water in Gen. 7:11, Sarna remarks that "the 'great deep' is the cosmic abyssal water" in Gen. 1:2, and "the 'floodgates of the sky' are openings in the expanse of the heavens through which water from the celestial part of the cosmic ocean can escape onto the earth."<sup>38</sup>

The governing power of God is revealed in the mention of "God's Hebrew *ruah* [wind]" (8:1) that "heralds the reimposition of order,"<sup>39</sup> and the rearrangement of natural order in Gen. 8:22. Physical forces will be released again in the last days to begin a new creation (1 Pet. 3:10-13).

**Educational implications.** Adventist natural scientists have the advantage of being able to present the origin and catastrophe from a consistent scientific point of view.

**a. Catastrophe.** The Flood narrative implies "worldwide water and high energy events."<sup>40</sup> As believers in the historicity of the Flood, we may show its evidences in natural science classes. On the basis of a cosmic catastrophe, many hard questions regarding the young age of the earth can be explained to the students.

The geological theory of continental drift can also support the Flood. There are several theories involved: plate tectonics, sea-floor spreading, magnetic stripes, magnetic field, dynamo,

K-Ar dating. Psalm 104:6-8, which describes the waters hastening away from the mountains by God's rebuke, could explain the vertical movement of the basalt at the end of the Flood. If this is correct, "the mountains of Ararat" in Gen. 8:4 might be an intersecting area of three continental plates.<sup>41</sup>

Wide-scale fossil preservation, evidence of underwater activity on the continents, and missing erosion and deposition are good subjects in which the teacher can demonstrate the work of God in the Flood.<sup>42</sup> The Grand Canyon is a good illustration of catastrophe.<sup>43</sup>

**b. Creation.** We can focus on God's creation through a biological approach. The providence and wonders of God can be illustrated by the ultrasonic holography of bats, Fuller's Dome of viruses, the spider's web, the migration of birds, and the structure of DNA. Physiology, physics, and astronomy have their own evidences for God.<sup>44</sup> Through the book of nature, teachers can lead the eyes of their students to God the Creator, and lead them to commit their lives to Him.

**c. Worship.** God is worthy to receive our worship for His Creatorship, sovereignty, and omnipotence. Teachers can instruct their students in the value of worship. The following ideas may be integrated in the worship experience. God wants to have a personal loving relationship with us, for He is our Creator. We are the image of God, and have capability to communicate with God. Preachers, Bible Instructors, and God-fearing teachers need to point out the evidence of Creation in nature, human relationship, and various fields of learning.

Fear of God is to be maintained in our attitude to God, for He is our Judge. God's laws - physical, moral, or spiritual, need to be emphasized. Science teachers may furnish guidelines to students concerning rightful use of the science for the benefit of humanity. Science without God can be disastrous for human beings. True worship affects the attitude of scholars in doing their study and application.

Worship is concerned with human destiny, life or death. It separates the righteous and the unrighteous. Just as Noah's relationship with God made him a righteous person, so human beings can be right with God through worship. The value of daily devotion cannot be emphasized too much in this area.

Through worship we have dignity as the children of God. We worship God, because we are His creation. If we accept God as our Creator, we would deny the erroneous hypothetical teachings found in evolution.

### C. Protection of God's Faithful People

In every generation God's people have suffered in the world for the sake of God's name. The opening chapter of the Flood narrative describes the condition of the world that threatened God's faithful people. God kept His faithful people not only in the evil world, but also in the midst of great waters. These are encouraging lessons for us.

**(1) Biblical References:** The Flood narrative describes a series of God's protective acts for Noah. Noah was preserved by God's grace in the billows of violence and corruption in the

world (6:1-9), and his companions were kept alive in the midst of the chaotic waters (7:11-8:1).

(2) **Protection of God's Faithful People.** God's grace (6:8) and remembrance (8:1) are key words in understanding the stated theological theme. Noah was preserved from the threats of the evil world, and from the overflowing chaotic waters by God's grace and remembrance. As Hasel points out, the remnant motif is prominent in the narrative (7:23).<sup>45</sup>

a. **God's protection from the evil world.** The characteristics of the antediluvians' sins were corruption, violence, and autonomy. The word "corrupt" (vs. 11, 12) is a reminder of the original creation. In contrast to the divine satisfaction in Gen. 1:31, the antediluvians totally deviated from the original design of God. The double meanings of *shachath*, "corrupt" and "to destroy," indicate the self-destructive nature of sin. When the original design of God the Creator is totally corrupted, it self-destructs.<sup>46</sup> *Hamas*, "violence," is the "revolt against the order of creation, a rejection of the life of obedience natural to a created being," and it is the technical term for the oppression of the weak by the strong.<sup>47</sup> Cain and Lamech displayed a violent way of life, and it became the worldwide life-style for which *Nephilim*, "giants" (6:4) were the famous. *Nephilim*, a word derived from the verb *naphal*, "to fall," can be understood as "a group of 'fallen,' 'oppressive,' or 'violent' people."<sup>48</sup> They were so autonomous that every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil, the exact opposite of the original design of their Creator.

Only God's grace can keep His people safe in an evil world. Keeping His people secure from the threats of an evil world and its powers were visible in Jesus' works and prayers (John 17:11-15). By walking with God like Noah, the imagination of the thoughts of our hearts can be acceptable in God's sight (Psa 19:14), and we will enjoy His presence and protection. Perfect conformity to the will of God through a loving relationship is the key to a victorious life. Noah's perfect obedient life is our example (6:22; 7:5).

b. **God's protection from the great tribulation.** The Flood was an eschatological event (6:13). The act of entering the ark was an act of final separation from evil contemporaries. Only the righteous people were in the ark, and the seven days in the ark before the Flood would have been a period of severe testing of their faith (7:4). God "shut him in" (7:16), and those in the ark were at the mercy of the chaotic waves of the waters. Their hope for life did not depend on the fragile wooden ark, but on the grace of God. Only God's remembrance of them in the

ark could ensure their salvation (8:1). And God did not betray their faith.

God's people are exposed to great tribulation whenever the evil principalities arbitrarily rise against them. Psalm 46 praises God for the protection of God's people who are in great difficulty comparable to the experience of Noah in the ark at the Flood (vs. 2-3). God is still keeping those who take refuge in Him (v. 1). This will be the experience of God's faithful people at the end of time (Rev. 7:13-17), and they will praise God for His marvelous salvation by singing the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb (Rev. 15:3, 4).

**Educational Implications.** Educators may prepare their students to face the temptations, threats, and persecution in the world, be they temporal or eschatological, i.e. the tribulation of Jacob. It may be done in constructive and positive ways that emphasize affirmative values as follows: Teachers need to avoid exaggerating the crisis, or concentrating on the difficulties that we are facing. It will often shrink the hearts of students. Fear or terror does not create hope and courage in the hearts of their students. Instead they may emphasize the assurance of salvation. Lectures on immune systems of our body can be used as an illustration of God's protection.

Sabbath School hour can be useful to illustrate God's protection. Through mission stories and personal testimonies, students can see the providence of God, and be vitalized with the ever-present help of God. Above all, students need to nurture their faith in God's word. They can have experiential faith, and victory over sin through the power of God's word (Psa. 119:11).

#### **E. Warning for the Future**

The narrative of the Flood gives lessons for us in fulfilling our mission. We have an everlasting gospel that warns people to flee from destruction, and that invites people to join in true worship of the Creator that they might be saved.

**a. Biblical References:** God warned Noah about the coming Flood with the instruction to prepare an ark (6:13 ff.). God commanded Noah to have his family enter the ark (6:18; 7:1, 7). Noah did all that God told him to do (6:22). Genesis says no more concerning his warning activity. But the New Testament alludes to it by calling him "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5).

**b. Warning for the Future.** The messenger and the message cannot be separated. The messenger needs to have a message from God. Noah received an eschatological message: "The end of all

flesh has come before me"(6:13). The partaker of the solemn message needs to know who the revealer is if he is to be held accountable for the message. Noah knew who his God was. He had a living personal relationship with God - "Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD," "Noah walked with God."(6:8, 9). The concept of "walking" needs to be explored. Hebrew word *hālak*, "to walk," can express the life style of the truly pious who "follow God's leading in all that they do (i.e., they keep his commandments, I Kgs. 3:14; Ps. 119:1ff.)," and the Hithpael form used in Gen. 6:9 "emphasize the continuity of the action. Striking examples of men who so lived before God are Enoch, Noah, Abraham, etc. (Gen. 5:22; 6:9; 17:1)."<sup>49</sup>

His whole life was affected by this relationship in contrast to the autonomous people living without God - "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations"(6:9). Through this relationship he kept his faith in "things not yet seen"(Heb. 11:7), and obeyed all that God commanded (6:22; 7:5). Building a ship on dry land was a test for Noah. "That was a test of his obedience and faith. But he passed the test, just as Abraham later followed God's command implicitly (ch. 12.4 ff.)"<sup>50</sup>

Messengers of God need to emphasize the saving power of the Cross. It is not surprising that Isa. 54:9-10, the succeeding chapter of Isa. 53, emphasizes God's salvation for His people in the midst of chaotic waters, an analogy to the Genesis Flood. Only the suffering servant, Jesus Christ, achieves salvation from the chaotic forces.

Righteousness by faith, one of the sure foundations of salvation, is experienced on the personal level. Ezekiel 14:14, 20 seem to support this idea where Noah, Daniel, and Job are cited in the context of a saving act of God for the righteous remnant. Proper attention needs to be given to Peter's reference to the saving activity of the Holy Spirit in the antediluvian times (1 Pet. 3:20). Just as Jesus worked through the Holy Spirit in those days, He sends His Spirit today to "convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment"(John 16:8).

"The sea and the springs of water" in Rev. 14:7 relates the three angels' message to the Flood. Just as the antediluvians negated the supremacy of their Creator and deviated from His original plan, last day people are taking the same track toward doom. If they do not return to the worship of the Creator, they will be destroyed by the worldwide catastrophe at the coming of Jesus.

We have a worldwide mission to prepare people for the judgment by returning to the Creator (Rev. 14:6). Persecution, prejudice, and misunderstanding might await us. There might be just a handful converted to the true Creator as we can see in

some countries, or the fruit of our mission might be limited to our own family members as in Noah's family. But the assurance of salvation is already given to those who will be patient and faithful to Jesus and His commandments to the end of time.

**Educational implications:** Cooperating with the Holy Spirit, educators can return the hearts of their students to the Creator and prepare them for the second coming of our Lord. This work can be done in the classroom by showing God's mercy in his provision for salvation, by explaining the fulfillment of Bible prophecy and the signs of His coming, by demonstrating the regrettable consequences of breaking His laws in the physical and natural realms, and by illustrating the restorative mechanisms in nature. All of the subjects we teach can contribute to the formation of a Christian worldview for students, can help them to think Christianly, and can inspire them to work for the progress of God's kingdom.

#### CONCLUSION

Each theological theme in Genesis 6-9 has a practical impact on education. The period of grace theme is concerned with discipline, the sovereignty and power of God with natural science (catastrophe, geology, biology, paleontology, and scientific creation), the protection of his faithful people theme with trusting God's faithfulness in the time of persecution, and warning for the future theme with the mission of the Gospel.

The Flood narrative in Gen. 6-9 provides fertile ground for demonstrating the need to return our hearts to the will of our Creator. By applying its emerging educational implications to student learning, teachers can be good shepherds who lead their students to the life-giving pastures and springs of knowledge in the classroom. In this way, the schoolhouse becomes but a precursor to the heavenly house where we may dwell with our Father who is eagerly awaiting the reunion of His earthly children.

There are other major themes in Genesis 6-9 such as covenant, land, judgment of God, righteousness by faith, new creation, etc. Those themes contain additional material useful to the work of integrating faith and learning by other students of God's Word.

<sup>1</sup> The representative animals were included in the provision of God's salvation.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 24:37, 38; Luke 17:26, 27.

<sup>3</sup> There are four main ancient Near Eastern flood stories that shed lights for understanding of the Genesis Flood narrative.

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They are (1) the Eridu Genesis: Thorkild Jacobsen, "The Eridu Genesis," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100 (1981): 513-529; (2) the Epic of Atrahasis: Wilfred G. Lambert and A. Millard, *Atrahasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 1-105; (3) the Epic of Gilgamesh: E. A. Speiser, trans., "The Epic of Gilgamesh," in *The Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. James B. Pritchard (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 72-98; and (4) Berossus Account of the Flood: Lambert and Millard, 134-137.

<sup>4</sup> Biblical scholars have focused their study on the introductory questions such as the historicity of the material, source-critical questions, structural unity, the extent of the Flood, the ancient Near East background, the harmony of the chronological data and of the number of animals that entered the ark, and the relationship between science and the narrative. The scholarly world has produced little dealing with the theology of the Flood.

<sup>5</sup> The rejection of the historical worldwide flood is related to the understanding of creation in Gen. 1-2. "The modern negation of the belief in creation has Karl Barth as its spiritual father." Gustaf Wingren, *The Flight from Creation* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1971), 20.

<sup>6</sup> Gen. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9a; 10:1, 32; 11:10a 27a; 25:12, 13, 19a; 36:1, 9; 37:2.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9a; 10:1; 11:10a 27a; 25:12, 19a; 36:1, 9; 37:2.

<sup>8</sup> R. K. Harrison, "genealogy," *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 2:424.

<sup>9</sup> Richard M. Davidson, "In the Beginning: How to Interpret Genesis 1," *Dialogue* (1994) 6: 3; Bernhard W. Anderson, *Creation Versus Chaos: The Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible* (New York: Association Press, 1967), 33; Victor P. Hamilton, "yld," *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, ed. by Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 2:459.

<sup>10</sup> Leonard Woolley, "Stories of the Creation and the Flood," PEQ 88 (1956): 14.

<sup>11</sup> Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Biblical View of the Extent of the Flood," *Origins* 2 (1975): 77-95; "Some Issues Regarding the Nature and Universality of the Genesis Flood Narrative," *Origins* 5 (1978): 83-98.

<sup>12</sup> Richard M. Davidson, "Biblical Evidence for the Universality of the Genesis Flood," *Creation, Catastrophe, and Calvary: Why a Global Flood Is Vital to the Doctrine of Atonement?* ed. John Templeton Baldwin (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 79-92. Davidson's eight terms or phrases are as follows: (1) "the

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earth" (Gen. 6:12, 13, 17, etc; cf. Gen. 1:1, 2, 10), (2) "upon the face of all the earth" (Gen. 7:3; 8:9; cf. Gen. 1:29), (3) "face of the ground" (Gen. 7:4, 22, 23: 8:8, 13; cf. Gen. 2:6), (4) "all flesh" (Gen. 6:12, 13, 17, 19; 7:16, 21; 8:17; 9:11, 15, 16, 17), (5) "every living thing" (Gen. 6:19; cf. 7:4, 23), (6) "under the whole heaven" (Gen. 7:19; cf. Deut 2:25; 4:19; Job 28:24; 37:3; 41:11; Dan. 9:12), (7) "all the fountains of the great deep" (Gen. 7:11; 8:2; cf. Gen. 1:2), (8) *mabbūl* (12 occurrences in Genesis, once in Psalm 29:10). Originally this article appeared first in *Origins* 22 (1995): 58-73.

<sup>13</sup> *Origins* 22 (1995): 64. For Davidson's fourteen theological significances of the universal Flood, see, *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: From Adam to Noah* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), 297-298.

<sup>15</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, "Genesis 1-15," *Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 142.

<sup>16</sup> Augustine, Luther, and Calvin accepted it as a period of grace. See, John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch As Narrative: A Biblical-Theological commentary*, Library of biblical Interpretation (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 122; Victor P. Hamilton, "The Book of Genesis: chapters 1-17," *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 269. Keil, König, and Kidner are the supporters of the period of grace. cf. Gordon J. Wenham, *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Two books of the minor prophets in the Old Testament, i.e. Jonah and Nahum, were concerned about the destiny of Nineveh.

<sup>18</sup> For a masterpiece on Jesus Christ's high priesthood service in heavenly sanctuary, see, Edward Heppenstall, *Our High Priest: Jesus Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary* (Washington: Review and Herald, 1972).

<sup>19</sup> The question of the serpent, "Did God really say..." (Gen. 3:1) suggests that the first couple had intimate close relationship with God. They had face-to-face fellowship with God. Genesis 2 is a description what their relationship was. If they could utilize the fellowship and developed living relationship with God, then they could have passed the temptation.

<sup>20</sup> They enjoyed blessing of "one language and a common speech" (11:1), and extraordinary mental and physical ability to plan and to achieve a building project "that reaches to the heavens" (11:4). They had knowledge of God through Noah and Noah's sons.

<sup>21</sup> John H. Sailhamer, *ibid.*, 122. The concept of period of grace was held by Augustine, Luther and Calvin. See, *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Gen. 2:5-6, 10-14 indicates the source of water in relation to antediluvians' agricultural work. Hebrew term *éđin* verse 6 is rendered as "mist" (KJV, RSV, NASB) or "stream" (NIV, NRSV). For

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its etymological implication on flooding water out of subterranean ocean, see David Toshio Tsumura, "Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern Stories of Creation and Flood: An Introduction," in *I Studied Inscriptions From Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11*, ed. Richard S. Hess, and David Toshio Tsumura (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 40.

<sup>23</sup> KJV translates Gen. 6:3 as "My spirit shall not always strive with man." The term *strive* in Hebrew is *yādōn*, a hapax legomenon (= word that occurs once in the Bible), and is translated in various ways according to the understanding of its roots: "strive" (NASB), "contend" (NIV), and "abide" (RSV). On a brief summary of the contemporary scholar's translation, see, Victor P. Hamilton, *ibid.*, 266-267.

<sup>24</sup> Richard M. Davidson, "Flood," *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 261-262.

<sup>25</sup> David Clines, "Noah's Flood: The Theology of the Flood Narrative," *Faith and Thought*, 100.2 (1972-3): 131-132.

<sup>26</sup> IBC 250.

<sup>27</sup> J. C. Moyer, "End," *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 2:79-80.

<sup>28</sup> Leonard J. Coppes, "qēš," *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute, 1980), 2060a.

<sup>29</sup> M. Wagner, "qēš," *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, ed. Ernst Jenni, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 1155.

<sup>30</sup> David Clines, *ibid.*, 133-134.

<sup>31</sup> Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Pollution, Purification and Purgation in Biblical Israel," *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth*, eds. C. Meyers and M. O'Connor (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 409-410.

<sup>32</sup> Gen. 2:7. Cf. Gen. 2:21, 22. "The personal relation between Yahweh and his creation is vividly portrayed .. Yahweh 'forms' man suggests the image of the potter molding clay from the ground and provides him with an environment suitable for his welfare. ... Elsewhere the image of the divine Potter expresses the sovereignty of God over his creatures (Isa. 29:15-16; 45:9-13; Jer. 18:1-6; Rom. 9:20-21)." B.W. Anderson, "Creation," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 1:728.

<sup>33</sup> Nahum M. Sarna, "Genesis," *The JPS. Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 47.

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- <sup>34</sup> Elmer A. Martens, *God's Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1990), 30.
- <sup>35</sup> On the questions of the overloaded ark, and the destroyed species, see, L. James Gibson, *The Flood: A Challenge to the Integration of Faith and Learning as Seen by a Believing Scientist*, Paper read on 27<sup>th</sup> Faith and Learning Seminar (Dec. 3-15, 2000), 8.
- <sup>36</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972), 128.
- <sup>37</sup> Nahum M. Sarna, *ibid.*, 48.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.
- <sup>40</sup> L. James Gibson, *ibid.*, 10.
- <sup>41</sup> Kyu Bong Lee, *Creation in the Light of Science* (Seoul, Korea: Yuhan Press, 2000), 185-200.
- <sup>42</sup> L. James Gibson, *ibid.*, 6-7.
- <sup>43</sup> Ariel Roth, "The Grand Canyon and the Genesis Flood," *Creation, Catastrophe, and Calvary: Why a Global Flood Is Vital to the Doctrine of Atonement?* 93-107.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 369-408.
- <sup>45</sup> Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant : The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah*, 3rd ed., Andrews University Monographs 5 (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1980).
- <sup>46</sup> David Clines, *ibid.*, 133. Cf. Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis. Volume 2: From Noah to Abraham* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1964), 53.
- <sup>47</sup> David Clines, *ibid.*, 133-134.
- <sup>48</sup> Arthur J. Ferch, *Genesis: In the Beginning* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1985), 54.
- <sup>49</sup> Leonard J. Copes, "ḥālak," TWOT 498.
- <sup>50</sup> Gerhard von Rad, "Genesis," *The Old Testament Library*, revised ed. (Philadelphia, Penn.: Westminster Press, 1972), 120.