

Thoughts Comparing/Contrasting “Noah” with the Biblical Account of Noah

- This is roughly from Genesis 3-9, Daniel 4, Matthew 23, Luke 17, and Hebrews 11

1. Seth’s line was comprised of only a few people in the movie. But in the Bible, that’s just not the case. Each “father” had many sons and daughters. There would have been hundred’s of thousands of descendants of Shem by the time of Noah. Although the movie tries to emphasize the cursedness of Cain’s descendants and the blessedness of Seth’s, the contrast between the two “lines” isn’t explicitly stated in the Bible. The Bible clearly says that all men were sinful during this time and that the whole world was being judged. The judgment wasn’t based on what family someone came from (because the line of Adam was cursed—and he’s everybody’s daddy) but whether they placed their faith in (or “walked with”) God.
2. Although no wives names are in the biblical account, Noah and all his sons had wives. And all eight of them were invited to be on the ark.
3. The Watchers weren’t needed to help Cain. Even though Cain was cursed, God placed a mark on him so people wouldn’t kill him (Gen. 4:15), so the whole Watcher element is interesting (I actually liked the fictional plotline—it was all about redemption) but nothing else. I think they just made the movie more epic and otherworldly [like the glowing rocks, dream drugs from Methuselah, healings of barren wombs (although God certainly has a history of doing that)].
4. Noah got clear revelation from God. There are actually 28 verses of direct instructions to Noah, including:
 - a. God’s intentions
 - b. God’s rationale
 - c. God’s conclusion
 - d. Command to build an ark
 - e. The dimensions of the ark
 - f. The design of the ark
 - g. That The Flood is coming
 - h. God’s plan to save Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives
 - i. God’s plan to save the species
 - j. God’s plan on how to care for plant life
 - k. God’s invitation to enter the ark
 - l. God’s command to account for having to have enough clean animals available for sacrifice (an additional twelve beyond the pair)
 - m. God’s command to have seven pairs of each kind of bird
 - n. The time frame of The Flood coming and how long the rains will last
 - o. When it was time to exit the ark
 - p. When it was time to release the animals
 - q. God’s pleasure with Noah’s worship
 - r. God blessing Noah’s family
 - s. That animals will now fear humans and that man is the keeper of the animal world

- t. That man should not eat the life-blood of animals
- u. That man will pay for shedding another man's blood
- v. That man should multiply
- w. God makes the covenant with every human and animal that He will not judge the world through catastrophic worldwide Flood again
- x. God speaks of the sign of this covenant: the rainbow
- y. God says that the rainbow will remind Him of this covenant

The reason I bring up this seemingly exhaustive list is because one of the main problems with the movie and the Biblical account is that so much of Noah's revelation from God (in the movie) isn't crystalized. In the movie, he's trying to figure out what to do—in the Bible he KNOWS what to do.

5. The movie makes a big deal about Shem's lady friend (who I'm just going to call Hermione), but she's not really a character in the Bible. More on that later.
6. Noah doesn't get help from watchers in building the ark. From all we know, it just says that Noah did what God told him to do. I can imagine his family pitched in, though. I can only assume that this inclusion was primarily for a cool redemptive story, some epic battle scenes, and a quickening of the ark-building. Also, I believe that Noah built the ark for a loooooong time. It's my opinion that the ark was built over 120 years—so Noah getting the help moved the story along.
7. There is no conflict between Noah and Ham about Ham getting to have a woman of his own because Ham clearly has a wife in the Bible. [I can understand why the movie-makers included this plot line, though, because it kind of makes Ham the voice of the skeptic when the people outside the ark die.] But we have no indication that any family member disapproved of what Noah was doing in the Bible.
8. Ham makes the claim that the girl caught in the trap is "good." That's impossible. The Bible is clear that no one was good. This girl, like Ham, becomes the personification of an issue that people really struggle with when it comes to the idea of the Flood. That is, in a quote, "Surely there had to be innocent people who had never done anything wrong who were just drowned, right? What right did Noah have to exclude them?" All I can say is that the narrative said that everyone was jacked up during that time because of sin. The emphasis is strong in Genesis 6:5 that people were totally depraved.
9. Methuselah is not a major player in the Flood narrative in the Bible. In fact, we don't know much about him except that he lived longer than anyone ever. Two important things to note, though.
 - a. His dad walked with God and then didn't die—he warped to heaven.
 - b. His name means "sending forth." I believe that this is prophetic considering that, upon the death of Methuselah (if you do the math on the genealogies), it appears that the Flood started. In other words, whenever Methuselah breathed his last, the Flood came. If that is, in fact, true, I think it's a testament to God's grace that the man who lived the longest had that attached to his death—God gave man the

maximum time allowable to stop “contending” with the Holy Spirit and accept Him.

10. It is my belief (and I believe this is supported by Hebrews 11:7) that Noah was considered righteous because he walked with God and picked up a hammer to build the ark by FAITH. In other words, I don't think Noah is wrong in his conclusions that he's just as bad (in some ways) as the men and women outside the ark. He masterfully cuts a hole through any false sense of piety that his wife tries to have about their “goodness” and their sons' “goodness.” Even their good was motivated by selfishness. We never get any words from Noah's wife in the Bible, but Noah's wife (in the movie) makes a mistake many of us make when she says something to the extent of, “Well, surely all we need to do is love one another to be good, right?” Nope. We need to be without sin. The wages of sin is death. No one can be called righteous by their own definition of righteousness. Only God can declare someone righteous.
11. God is just AND loving. In the movie, it appears that God is only just; and that's just not true. God definitely deals with the wickedness of man by destroying them in the Flood; but we are still left wondering (by the movie makers) whether Noah's logical conclusion that every human SHOULD die is the correct one. Noah's logic is pretty on point. If all men are sinful, what makes him or his family (or his grandchildren) any better? If they've made a mess of things once, won't they just do it again? This is a logical conclusion, but it doesn't take into account God's love for mankind through His care for Noah and his family. [I think a lot of people are going to be weirded out and repulsed by the visions of “crazy Noah” running around the ark aiming a knife at his grandkids, but that emotional response might actually blind us from a pretty insightful logical conclusion about the total depravity of mankind. Thank God that God knows how to love us WHILE ALSO dealing justly with sin.]
12. What we don't realize is that, for those outside the ark, judgment comes immediately; but, for those in the ark and everyone in perpetuity (for Noah, his wife, his sons, their wives, and their descendants) judgment will come in a DIFFERENT fashion. Sin will be paid for in one way or another. For those outside the ark, they paid with their lives. For those inside (and those in the future), it would be paid at the end of our lives or through the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. And, if you don't think that Jesus dying on the Cross was part of the plan yet (because they sure don't talk about Him in the movie), keep in mind that in Genesis 3:15 (a few chapters earlier) we hear a prophecy that says that a future descendant of Eve will be killed by but utterly destroy the effects of the serpent and sin. Sounds like a man, born of a virgin, getting killed, and conquering the effects of sin to me. Noah (in the movie) sat his family around the fire to tell most of the story, but he forgot about that part. Noah (and all who had faith) looked forward to a future Savior. Noah's faith to build the ark was based on more than mere survival. That prophecy about a Savior (and many subsequent ones) was the backdrop for all who had faith before Jesus came on the scene.

13. Oh, and by the way, Noah wouldn't have been running around with a knife trying to kill off his chances of having descendants because that would have meant that the prophecy in Genesis 3:15 would be impossible. A descendent of EVE would crush sin.
14. Noah was disobedient to God in the movie when he opted to not kill his grand-daughters. In the Bible, he is obedient in the matter of the ark. Hermione tells Noah (in the movie) that God gave him the choice as to whether mankind was worth saving. That may be the biggest, dumbest discrepancy between the movie and the Bible. GOD looked down on Noah and his whole family and saw nothing but love. God decided to save mankind from the Flood—not Noah. God decided to make a way. But, back to the original point, Noah wouldn't have dared go against God's command. He is characterized by his obedience. Except for...
15. The whole drunk, naked Noah scene. It's way jacked up. Yes, Noah got drunk in the Bible. Yes, he was naked. Yes, Ham discovered him. Now, there isn't enough detail for what Ham (and his son Canaan) did to/with Noah while he was drunk; but, whatever it was, it caused Noah to wake up and curse CANAAN. Japheth and Shem had the respect to cover up daddy with a blanket. Why was Canaan cursed and not Ham? The Book of Genesis was written shortly before the Israelites were entering the Promised Land. The occupants of the Promised Land were the Canaanites, the descendants of Ham's son, Canaan. God wanted to remind the troops that Canaan was already cursed and in need of judgment (obliteration) by the hands of the Israelite army. The blessings and curses of Noah during this time are interesting. Japheth gets to be expansive. Good for him. Most Gentiles would be descendants of Japheth (like me). Canaan was cursed to be a servant—a servant of Shem. Noah also blesses Shem, saying that "The LORD will dwell in the tents of Shem." No surprise that the descendants of Shem are the Israelites. When you make a racist joke about a Jewish person, it's "anti-Semitic" (or "Shemitic" ...if you will). So, this cursing scene is all about establishing WHY the Israelites are totally justified in what they are about to do—which is take the Promised Land out of the hands of the cursed Canaanites.
16. Tubal-Cain really is a person in the Bible, a descendant of Cain, whose father was a murderer, and who was known as a "forger of all instruments of bronze and iron." In that sense, weapons wouldn't be out of the question. There was definitely could have been a progression of family dysfunction for Tubal-Cain because his dad (Lamech) had two wives and bragged about killing a dude. In other words, maybe he did want to build weapons with such an evil dad. His dad scoffs at the curse of Cain and says bring on eleven times as much cursing for his sin. So Tubal-Cain could have been a historically bad guy, but he wasn't a stowaway on the ark or even the "king" of the drowned people. But...he was certainly a good craftsman; and a good craftsman with a bad heart could certainly use his talents to make weapons of mass destruction.

17. “The Watchers,” are mentioned almost synonymously with “angels” in the Book of Daniel, and their primary purpose is to tell Nebuchadnezzar about his downfall (Dan. 4:13, 17, 23). The movie version of “watchers” seems to be an amalgamation of these angelic beings and the Nephilim (mentioned in Gen. 6:1, 4). Although some believe that the “giants” or more ubiquitously named “Nephilim” were giants or monstrosities (because fallen angels interbred with human beings), another explanation (and the belief that I hold) is that these Nephilim were just super-accomplished “man-at-his-fullest-potential” men who were “mighty MEN who were of old, the MEN of renown.” I believe that the Nephilim are in the Genesis account because they represent man’s greatest potential (yet absolute moral corruption). No matter how mighty or renown these men were, it didn’t save them in the end.
18. Eating meat wasn’t sanctioned by God until after the ark. That means that Noah (because he “walked with God”) would have been vegetarian, but all bets were off for the average guy. If they killed people, they probably killed animals too. Although we don’t know if the bad guys were meat-eaters or not, if they were, God certainly didn’t approve.
19. Here’s a biggie. No one was restricted from entering the ark. I’m taking my cues from Jesus Himself on this one. Jesus describes His second coming in Matthew 24 and Luke 17; and, in both instances, he compares the totally-caught-off-guard, the-people-were-partying-like-it’s-1999 nature of the people who drowned to the way people will be towards His return. In other words, I wonder if anyone else even noticed the ark. I know we LIKE to think that Noah bravely endured the insults of scoffers, but maybe that’s not how it happened. Or, if it did happen that way, they definitely thought Noah was so koo-koo for Coco Puffs that they didn’t really think the ark could have saved them anyway. I believe that the waters bursting forth and the heavens bursting forth meant that rain came quick—not enough for an epic fight scene or even a charge. You can’t run from a tsunami.
20. People are ticked about the whole Noah being “green” thing; but, honestly, there is a sense that sin has absolutely corrupted the earth itself. Since man was charged (in the Garden) to care for the earth, I have zero qualms with Noah caring about the sanctity of nature.
21. God sealed Noah and his family in the ark. It wasn’t like a garage door that you could just open whenever you wanted. Also, there was a window, but I think it was more like a 18 inch (cubit) ventilation at the top of each wall. Those animals were not sleeping (that’s a movie construction...probably a smart way to save on CG money), and they were probably pooping a lot!
22. Noah knows when the Flood is going to happen. He gives him a week’s notice towards the end. In the movie it seems like kind of a mystery.
23. Russell Crowe did not look 600. But Noah was.
24. They were on the ark for about a year, and there was no escape raft that got lit on fire because I don’t think there was any place Noah’s family would have rather been.

25. Noah sacrificed to God immediately upon exiting the ark. The drunk scene was way later (later enough that Canaan had grown up enough to be a trouble-maker).
26. Love between people is seen as more important than love for God. That's out of balance. We are supposed to love God and love people. Noah's wife goes off on an errand to Methuselah to insure her sons' happiness because, I guess, to her, that is the most loving thing to do for them. At least within the plot of the story, she kind of usurps God's plan for her own plan. Now, isn't it nice that (even in the movie) there are two grand-daughters (one for Japheth and one for Ham when he returns from his emo phase). Even "movie God" provides. But, again, I don't think this glorification of "what about me" (or what about my kids or my girlfriend) is a good thing. At the end of the day, choosing to provide for our interests outside of God's will is still sin. Now, let me swing back here because I don't want anyone to think that I believe it WAS God's intention to exterminate the entire human race. Remember, Noah's wife and all his sons and daughters-in-law are saved. Everyone gets what they want/need in the Bible. Sure, the families of origin of all the women were probably missed—but I'd have to think that the Bible is right when it talked about their wickedness (so maybe the loss wasn't as great as we think).

What did I miss?