



## Sticky Notes: Questions Part 1

8/28/2011

After about a month long hiatus from Sticky Notes (Which I desperately needed) we're back at it with the beginning of our new series called "Questions." Basically the way this series happens is simple. A couple weeks ago we had students submit their tough questions. It's essentially any question about the Bible or life, or the world we live in they have unanswered or are wondering about and need help understanding. I'm using everything in context of what the Bible says about their questions whether it be historic in nature, theological or just "WHY." If you're a parent reading this, you'll be blown away by the depth and introspection coming from your student's questions.

Every week I'll post the individual questions that were answered along with the answer to that question with the scripture that pertains. You'll also notice that several questions are bunched together each week for the sake of avoiding repetition and keeping continuity for message writing. This helps me write actual messages to go along with the questions rather than just going down a list and answering the questions in successive order. Also, some questions will have a student's name next to it if they chose to take credit for the question, and some are anonymous. Make sense? HERE WE GO!

***PS. If you don't want to read all the questions and my lengthy responses, just skip to the end for the discussion questions from this week's message!***

### **Why do we have so many other theories about how we got here? –Ryan Johnson**

First let me say this. I gauge everything by what the Bible has to say. From its literal words to its context then on to understanding the nature of God through scripture as a whole we develop an understanding of what was and what is. The difficult thing is that not all Christians do or can agree on what the Bible says about how we got here. The best thing to do is settle on the basics: *A) God created EVERYTHING by speaking it into existence (Genesis 1:1) B) He created a world that he put into motion and operates on basic laws of nature everyday and (Genesis 1:3-31) C) Man is his greatest invention in this creation, created in HIS own image (Genesis 1:27).*

Understanding this, most of the world does not use the Bible as their basis for interpreting the "what" and the "why" of how we got here, so they get creative with their imaginations and develop some of their own ideas. The Theory of Evolution by Charles Darwin is a great example of someone looking at a world that turns based on laws of nature (that God put in place) every day and saying "well it had to get this way somehow" and creating an entirely reason based human answer to that question. The same goes for early people groups in the Bible who created gods out of the moon and the sun.

Even the Egyptians the Hebrews were freed from early on in the book of Exodus had a culture chocked full of different "answer" gods. By "answer gods" I simply am referring to the way they would answer questions about the world they lived in by creating different gods. For instance, "where did that tree come from?" There must be a god who created it, how about a creation god? Great, let's call him Amun! Thus you have another theory about how we got here. This has

happened literally millions of times throughout the years, first with false religions, rituals and gods and then later and more recently through science. Science has often been a great ally to the truth of our Word, but it still doesn't replace the issue of FAITH. This is why God established the 10 commands (**Exodus 20**) to show that he was the ONE TRUE GOD, creator of all and ruler of all.

### **If God flooded the earth where did the water go? –Carly Whitaker**

We know at the end of the flood (or **GREAT FLOOD Genesis 6-9**) the water receded enough for the ark to come to rest on the mount at Ararat (say that 10x fast). We know that water didn't just fall from the sky in a massive downpour, but it also came up from the ground as the "*springs of the great deep burst forth*" (**Genesis 7:11**) to flood the earth. So we know where it came from, where did all of it go? Well it's not like it went anywhere fast. God flooded the earth for 40 days and nights. The WHOLE earth, it says that the water came to a minimum of 20 feet high over the world's tallest mountain peaks (**Gen 7:20**). That's a lot of water! The easy answer is that all the water evaporated into the atmosphere. But it took time. After all they came to rest on a mountain, though the water most definitely continued to recede for a great while even after they got off the ark of which they were on for somewhere around 370-375 days which is OVER A YEAR! This seems like the most reasonable answer, though maybe just as water shot up from the great depths, maybe God opened them up like a giant drain in a bathtub and sucked it all out. Okay that's a little silly, but you get the idea.

### **How did God Make the Mountains, Caves and Crystals? –Cycy Neill**

I'd love to pretend like I have an exact answer to this but I'll simply speak to it the best I know how. SOME mountains come about as the result of volcanoes erupting molten debris into the area, and growing up from nothing to create islands and even whole island chains. Some mountains form as the result of tectonic plates shifting below our feet and shoving the ground upward to form them (this takes a LONG time). And even other mountains, let's say most of the major ranges in the world today, the Alps, the Carpathians, the Himalayas, the... wait for it... **THE ROCKIES** because of how established they are and the natural landscape around them lead me to believe they were spoken into existence. This coupled with the fact that they are mentioned in **Genesis 7** (see above, when the earth was flooded) and Noah's ark even came to rest on the Mountain at Ararat leads me to believe God's creativity sculpted them in the beginning just as he did with other landscapes.



1 Mt Nebo looking southwest over the north side of the Dead Sea

Mountains have also been mentioned in numerous places in the Bible when describing the beauty of God, his creativity, and even as a sign of Faith. Jesus tells us that if we have the tiniest amount of faith the size of a mustard seed (about a 5<sup>th</sup> the size of a sunflower seed) we are able to MOVE a mountain (**Matthew 17:20**). Elijah faced off against the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel in the northeastern part of Israel (**1 Kings 18**), and God took Moses onto mountains multiple times, the first to give him the ten commandments

(*Mt. Sinai, Exodus 19*) and second to show him the promised land from (*Mt. Nebo, Numbers 20:8-12*). Then there's Isaiah, who talks about people bringing God's message with the image of doing so ON a mountain (*Isaiah 52:7*). ALL OF THESE examples lead me to believe that God created mountains in the beginning and they have been just as loved and cherished as we appreciate our own Rocky Mountains in our backyard today.

In terms of caves and crystals, I believe both the rushing waters of the flood as well as the receding flood waters roaring over the earth and from the ground and sky played large roles in cutting through rocks. Thousands of underground rivers, drain ways and waterfalls still exist today contributing to the growth and development of caves and the precious stones within. Couple that with ongoing growth and stretches and groanings of our every day earth and you've got the development of precious stones! Personally I'm positive God definitely spoke these into existence as well, but they also continue to develop and grow because of the resources he's given us on the earth.

### **Why did God Make Different Colored People? –Anonymous**

With every answer we receive in this series regarding the "how did we get here" and "where did we come from" type questions it's important to understand that ALL of us have descended from 2 people: Adam and Eve. This means of all the diversity we see in complexion, skin tone, hair color, etc, each of us have a common ancestor. While God created man in his own image, he did only create just one man perfect as the original. However, since the flood (see the flood trend we're going with here?), with Noah being the man God chose along with his family to survive and repopulate the earth, We are also essentially descended from three people. These people are Noah's three sons, *Ham, Shem and Japheth* (**Genesis 10** - Yes those are their real names). These sons along with their wives are what we attribute three main races to around the world: **light skinned**, **medium skinned**, and **very dark skinned**. Following the confusion created with languages at the Tower of Babel (**Genesis 11**) these people groups spread outward from each other into groups that could be understood and began to populate and spread. This is the basis for how we have so many languages, nations and skin colors, but regardless of how many there are now they ALL point back to Adam. Crazy right? To think that with all the tensions and hate and struggles we have across racial boundaries all of us have the same great x900 grandfather.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. If you could have been the one to create the world from scratch, what types of creations do you think you would have chosen to add to it?
2. Read Genesis 7 & 8. What do you think a flood that covers the whole earth would have looked like? How fast would the water have had to rise to fill the whole earth in 40 days?
3. In Matthew 17:20, Jesus says that if we have faith only the size of a tiny little mustard seed, that we have the power to move a mountain. What do you think he meant by that? How big is your faith?
4. How do you think ALL the people in the world that came from Noah's three sons ended up with skin colors so drastically different? Have you thought about the fact that even people that look to be the exact opposite of one another can trace their roots all the way back to one person? Do you think the way you treat people would be different if you thought of everyone as the same?