

Aim: To look at how long people before and immediately after the flood live for.

Who is the oldest person that you know?

Have you ever seen someone who was 100 years old? I've seen some people on TV who were 100 – they had a special birthday party and they received a letter from the queen. But most people these days don't even make it to 100.

Have you ever looked at a chart showing how long the people before flood lived? As you can see they lived nearly 1000 years! That seems impossible to us, and many people think the Bible must be wrong about that. Some say that maybe a year wasn't as long as our years are or perhaps it actually means how many months old they were - but that would mean some of the people had children when they were only 5 years old, which doesn't make sense.

The thing that makes the most sense is to believe exactly what the Bible says. When God first created humans, He intended for them to live forever; their bodies were never supposed to wear out, but sin changed that.

Have a look at a chart showing when and how long the people before the flood lived. Find when the flood happened.

You will notice that people who were born after the flood had a much shorter life-span than those before the flood. There were probably several things that caused this but two of them are:

- Changes in the environment – the plants and air would not have been as good as before.
- When a smaller group of people intermarry, defects are more likely to occur in the DNA of their children – this can cause more health problems and shorter life spans. There were only 8 people on the ark.

You will notice another drop after Babel which was probably caused by similar things: smaller groups of people, moving to new locations and having to find new sources of food etc.

The Bible is not the only book that has records of people living a long time.

According to: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Longevity_narratives

The Persians have a book of poems which lists the rulers at the beginning of the world, showing that one lived 1000 years, another 500 years, another 200, 150 and then 120 years – these ages are very similar to the ages listed in the Bible. **Compare these ages with people from the Bible.**

The Sumerians (from what is now called Iraq) also have a list of ancient kings, only their years seem to be excessively big; but you can still see that the kings before the flood lived much longer than those afterwards.

Other people have claimed to be 200 or even 300 years old, or to know someone who was hundreds of years old. – It's hard to know if they are correct or not, but if we believe the Bible, then we have to believe that before, and soon after the flood, did live much longer than they live today.

You might check out this article about old people in the Guinness Records: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/oldest-person-ever-live-family-5444937>

When Jesus comes again He will restore our bodies, not as they are now, but as He first made Adams – bodies that will never grow old or sick, that will last forever.

Finish with Isaiah 40:31; Revelation 21:4-5; 1 Corinthians 15:54-55.