

THE FLOOD: A SILENT WITNESS II PETER 3

THE SILENT WITNESS BENEATH OUR FEET

We have come now to the conclusion of our look at the BOOK YOU CAN TRUST! The last element is the FLOOD. As an 11 year old Jr. High student I sat at the feet of Dr. John Whitcomb as he said:

We have been living in an age of deep skepticism. A century of evolutionary philosophy, with its seeds of naturalism and atheism, has yielded the bitter fruits of revolution, non-moralism, and despair. Nevertheless, even in such an age as this, God has "left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you rain from heaven, rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17).

There is also another silent, yet eloquent, witness in the very rocks of the earth's crust. In every nation, in the land beneath our feet, and in the hills and valleys through which we travel reposes a vast cemetery. Therein lie the bones and shells, the teeth and trails of innumerable animals, along with the compressed and carbonized remains of immense forests that once filled a beautiful world. Here and there, scattered widely throughout the rocks, can be found artifacts or other fossil evidences even of the human life of long ago.

Modern speculation has managed to distort the testimony of this sedimentary graveyard into a fictional record of slow evolutionary development over a billion years of imaginary earth history. This strange notion has indeed today become accepted and taught as scientific fact in most of our educational institutions all around the world.

Fossils, however, speak of death-not development! Their witness is one of extinction-not evolution. The God who created all things is a God of both power and mercy. He need not and would not have used the principles of suffering and death (especially the massive and violent death implicit in this fossil witness) as implements of creation.

Fossils speak of death, and death speaks of sin and judgment, not of creation and development. When correctly interpreted, whether theologically or scientifically, this world- wide witness in the very earth itself testifies of a sovereign Creator who controls and judges His creation. Rather than evolutionary progress over many ages, these stones cry out concerning a judicial termination of one age.

The Biblical record is complete with a first hand account of that great hydrodynamic convulsion with which God judged the wickedness of the antediluvian world. Whatever geological problems may be

suggested, there can no longer be any question that, if the word of God be true, the Genesis Flood was a world covering, cataclysmic judgment imposed by the strong hand of God.¹

LIVING IN A WORLD OF SCOFFERS

Now join me in II Peter 3. The Lord tells us what do do when you find yourself in a world that denies their Maker!

TRUST THE WORD v. 2

EXPECT THE SCOFFERS v. 3

As people run amok in sin and every form of debauchery and ungodliness, they will become more and more impervious to God's truth and resentful of His standards of righteousness. They will be so vile, wretched, and preoccupied with sex, drugs, alcohol, materialism, and pleasure seeking that they will believe every explanation for the end-time signs except the one given in Scripture. Rather than turning to God in repentance, they will curse Him (Rev. 9:21).

In the days of Noah before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage. While Noah built the ark, he also preached (2 Pet. 2:5), but the people were just as unconcerned about his preaching as about the ark he was building, thinking both were meaningless and absurd. They laughed when he spoke of the coming flood. They had never seen rain, much less a flood, because until that time the earth was apparently covered by a vapor canopy that provided all the moisture necessary for life to flourish. Because they had never seen such a calamity, they discounted the idea that it could happen. They therefore went about their daily routines of eating and drinking and of marrying and giving in marriage. It was business as usual until the day Noah entered the ark and it started to rain.

The people were so untouched by God's truth that they did not understand their perilous situation until the flood came and took them all away into a godless eternity. Flood translates kataklusmos, which means deluge or washing away, and is the term from which the English cataclysm is derived. Only after it was too late did the people of that generation understand their tragic destiny.

The times in which Noah grew up were among the most evil and corrupt in history. "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). If any man had reason to regret the time in which he lived it was Noah. But he did not complain about when he was born, his lot in life, or his calling. He obeyed as he was and where he was.

Noah's job was to warn the people of his time that God would soon judge them because of their wickedness and unbelief. They had had the same opportunity to know God and His will as had Noah. The difference between Noah and everyone around him was not a difference in the amount of light but a difference in response to it.

RESIST THE LIE v. 4

Satan's Gospel = uniformitarianism, evolution, impersonal god, animal ancestry and chance.

God's Truth = cataclysmic intervention, creation, personal God, image of God and purposeful design.

¹ World that Perished, foreword.

AFFIRM THE CREATOR v. 5

REMEMBER THE JUDGE v. 6

The people had no excuse for their sin before Noah began building the ark, and they had even less excuse after he finished. One hundred and twenty years, even when men sometimes lived to be nearly a thousand, was more than ample time for anyone to repent who wanted to repent. Spurgeon said, "He who does not believe God will punish sin will not believe that he will pardon it through atoning blood." Many people are glad to hear about God's gracious promises but want to hear nothing of His judgment. Spurgeon went on to say, "I charge you who profess the Lord not to be unbelieving with regard to the terrible threatenings of God to the ungodly. Believe the threat even though it should chill your blood. Believe though nature shrinks from the overwhelming doom. For if you do not believe, disbelieving God at one point will drive you to disbelieve God upon the other points of revealed truth."

Against that wicked, cruel, and dark world, Noah's life and testimony shined in glistening condemnation. Black never seems so black as when white is put beside it. The man of faith rebukes the world just by his living, even if he never utters a word of reproach. A young man of Athens told Socrates, "I hate you, because every time I meet you, you show me what I am."

ESCAPE THE FIRE v. 7

Perhaps the saddest lesson from Noah's day is that men have not changed in their attitude toward God since then, and will not change until the Lord returns. "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matt. 24:37-39).

The parallels of Noah's day to our own are sobering. In Noah's day God's message was rejected, as it is today. In his day, wickedness, immorality, violence, lewdness, vulgarity, profanity, lying, killing, and blasphemy were rampant, as they are today. In his day a remnant found grace, just as a remnant believes today. In Noah's day or shortly before it, Enoch was translated, picturing the rapture of believers when the Lord returns, which could be in our day. We can be as sure as they should have been that judgment is coming, because God has promised it just as clearly and men deserve it just as much. Someone has said, "If God doesn't destroy our world, He'll have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah." The next judgment will be different in two ways, however. First, it will not be by flood (Gen. 9:15) but by fire (2 Pet. 3:10). Second, it will be the last. And again the only security is refuge in God's ark, Jesus Christ.²

SEEK THE SAVIOR v. 8-9

It will be a moment of sheer terror when unbelievers face a holy God and realize with absolute certainty that they are eternally lost. That must have been the feeling of the people of Noah's day when they saw the flood waters rise above their heads and knew the door to the ark was unalterably shut.

The ark symbolized many of God's future dealings with men. The Hebrew word for pitch, for example, has the same root (kpr) as that used for atonement. The pitch kept the waters of judgment from entering the ark just as Christ's atoning blood keeps judgment from the sinner.

² MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.
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The ark is a beautiful picture of the salvation offered in Jesus Christ. The ark was easily large enough to hold all the animals needed to assure each species' survival. It had plenty of room for every person who wanted to come to God for safety. The fact that only eight persons came into the ark means that only eight wanted to be saved on God's terms. God does not wish "for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). God's nature does not change. His will in Peter's time was the same in Noah's time. Only those perished in the Flood who rejected God's way of salvation. Had more come to Him for safety, we can be sure the ark would have accommodated them. Just so, Jesus' blood is more than sufficient to atone for all the sins ever committed since the Fall. That no more people are saved than are simply means that these are the only ones who want to be saved. Jesus declared absolutely that no one who comes to Him will be cast out (John 6:37)