

THE HISTORIC FOUNDATION FOR OUR FAITH: THE SILENT WITNESS BENEATH OUR FEET GENESIS 6-8

"Heaven and Earth shall pass away—but my Word won't!" is what Jesus said. As we turn to Matthew 24:35 this morning, we each need to ask ourselves if we really do believe God, and affirm that belief by trusting this Book, the Bible.

The most powerful reason that I trust God's Word as absolutely trustworthy is the same reason you should: ***because Jesus did.***

Our Savior, Jesus Christ, Lord of Heaven and Earth, believed during His earthly life, that the Bible was God's Word—and still does.

What Did Jesus Believe?

Jesus told us that His Spirit inspired this Book and He believed in the trustworthiness of every word of this Book.

The Bible is the Foundation for our faith and ministry; and that is why we began examining and illustrating it as the Book we can trust from the first Sunday we shared.

I am challenging each of you with the 7 reasons we, like Jesus, should absolutely trust this Book. We are coming today to the third reason.

1. ***Jesus believed that the Bible was the Book we can trust Prophetically:*** because Jesus believed and affirmed that what the Old Testament prophets saw happening in the future, was going to happen (Matthew 24); and Jesus explained the same future events that John, Peter, and Paul all described in detail. Jesus believed that the prophecies of the Bible irrefutably affirmed the Scriptures as God's Word (Matthew 5:18). I trust God's Word because it is the only book that declares **future events with absolute accuracy** (Fulfilled Prophecy).
2. ***Jesus believed that the Bible was the Book we can trust Scientifically:*** because Jesus said that He was the Creator of everything (John 1:3); and that He created everything in six literal, 24 hour days (Exodus 20:11); and that the Universe is held together by the Word of His power (Col. 1:15-17). I believe the Bible is true because of the **absolutely verifiable scientific accuracy of God's Word.**

- 3. Jesus believed that the Bible was the Book we can trust Historically:** because Jesus believed and affirmed the record of events and people in the Bible as being true and reliable history, from Adam to Noah, and from Moses to Jonah—Jesus said the persons were real and the events literally happened as recorded in this Book. I believe the Bible is true because of the absolutely **trustworthy historical accuracy of God's Word.**¹

One simple way to demonstrate Christ's view of the Bible is to look at how Jesus read and understood the Bible. We'll see His conviction about the historical record of God's Word as we focus on Noah and the Flood. Jesus verified Noah as a literal historic person and the Flood as a literal historic event.

We are in Matthew 24, so please stand as we look at v. 35-39, and hear the voice of Jesus as He speaks to us from His Word.

Matthew 24:35-39 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. 36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. (NKJV)

Jesus affirmed the reality of a man named Noah; and Jesus verified the accuracy of the global, cataclysmic, hydrodynamic convulsion described in His Word—as the extinction level event to the Earth we know as the Flood of Noah.

That means that the Flood really happened, just like Moses literally described it in Genesis 6-8. So, because the Word of God is absolutely trustworthy, and you hold the Book You Can Trust in your hands, we turn to what I like to call:

The Silent Witness Beneath Our Feet²

Jesus affirmed the Flood as absolutely trustworthy history, with that tucked away in our minds, think with me about that Flood.

God described the Flood in greater detail than Creation. God gives us three full chapters to consider the magnitude of what He did.

¹ The rest of the seven reasons we can trust the Bible are: Fourthly, and most importantly because the Lord JESUS CHRIST trusted this book as God's Word; Fifthly, because the Apostles and Prophets completely trusted and affirmed God's Word. Sixthly, I am completely able to trust that the Bible is God's Word because of its incredible survival. Seventh and finally, I am convinced of the trustworthiness of the Bible because of its absolute unity. 960512AM BYCT-01

² 960714AM DDD-01; 960714PM DDD-02

As we turn back to Genesis 6-8, we are entering the biggest historic event that has ever happened to the Earth since Creation.

What has impacted the anthropology, geology, topography, and climate of this planet more than anything else until the End of the World? Yes, that's right—the Flood of Noah!

As an 11-year old Jr. High student, in Haslett, Michigan during the late 60's, I sat at the feet of Dr. John Whitcomb who came to our church and taught us about the Flood. Listen to what he said over 40 years ago:

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).

[God has left a] 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 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.³

³ World that Perished, foreword. [393 words]

God's Amazing Grace

One fascinating study is of the first time God introduces a concept to us in His Word. As we look at Genesis 6:8 we find perhaps the greatest word in the Bible as far as we who are saved are concerned, it is the word GRACE⁴.

As we study the flood always link with it the amazing grace of our loving Lord, grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt! Noah found grace in the yes of the Lord.

God introduces us to the word "grace" with the astoundingly vivid backdrop of the extinction level event called the Flood. What fantastic pictures of His Grace we see in Genesis 6, before the destruction of Earth by water, just as we see in Revelation 14 before the destruction of Earth by fire.

God's grace is also seen in the lead up to the time of the Flood. God sent Enoch a preaching prophet who warned the world.

Jude 14-15 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 "to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (NKJV)

Note that Jude says Enoch was seventh from Adam. Jesus called Adam the first man, and after Christ's birth in the last verse of Luke 3, the New Testament inspired Gospel writers say that Adam was the first human and Enoch was seventh after him. That is also an accurate record of history in this Book we can Trust.

But when God tells us of Methuselah son of Enoch, who at age 969 had the longest human life span and whose name meant "when he dies it comes", always remember that God also sent Noah a preacher of righteousness! And the longest sermon in the Bible is the 100 plus year sermon Noah preached as he built that Ark of Safety.

As we continue on to Genesis 7, join me for a visit to the Flood. First look at the amazing, eye-witness details that God gives us, and remember that the details given in God's Word have a purpose.

1. In the 600th year of Noah (second month, tenth day), Noah entered the ark (Gen. 7:4,10,11), and note that God Himself shut the door!
2. In the 600th year of Noah (second month, seventeenth day), the flood began (Gen. 7:11).

So that means that the Ark sat there, on dry land, sealed up for an entire week, which would be:

⁴ 960721 AM DDD-3

The longest week In history

The longest week in history ends with Genesis 7:10, "And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood began upon the earth." Seven days, after what?

Look at Genesis 7:1 "And the Lord said to Noah, come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation." And they went into the ark.

Noah had been building that building that was 450 feet long and 75 feet deep and almost five stories high; a wooden building, flat bottom, sitting there in his pasture.

Now old Noah was about 500 years old, 480 to be exact, when he started building this Ark. People must have thought he was a little strange. When this old man wasn't dragging boards up, building this building, he was preaching to them. And when he preached to them, and it says in the book of Peter that he was a preacher of righteousness, he was standing out like a bright light in the black darkness. He warned them that the God who created all things was going to send a cataclysmic judgment on the planet and kill everybody that hadn't come for shelter into his ark.

The crowds probably grew as the building grew, because for 120 years he built that thing. And his children helped him build this, his three sons. And I think that probably there was quite a gang that would come with their lawn chairs.

Mr. and Mrs. Scoffer would pull up their chairs on their lawn, because they abutted Noah's property, and out in the pasture behind was that great big thing he was building, and they'd pop those armchairs and they'd sit there and they would laugh at him and say, "Oh, Noah, what are you going to do with this building?" And they carried on for 120 years. But then something happened because in Genesis 7:1 the Lord said, "Come in". Here is a powerful reminder that:

Salvation is Divine

All over the planet God had been preparing two by two for the animals to converge on this spot. And some of them probably had to come a long ways. And so God had started them a long time before.

Can you imagine those animals making noises and excitedly, briskly trotting along because God had told the animals, "I'm going to destroy the earth. Go get in the Ark to be saved."

Those animals came from everywhere. Can you imagine the river of animals coming from every part of this globe, converging on Noah's pasture?

Can you imagine the people that lived along the pathway and watched this river of orderly animals coming? They were all paired up; and there were seven pairs of clean animals and just two pairs of unclean animals, as they moved right up that ramp into that big wooden barge. I'm sure that the crowd grew as that happened.

Have you thought very much about the Flood? Have you thought about how people from every corner of the earth saw a phenomenon that they could not dispel—animals that all of a sudden began to orderly march toward this building?

The people started looking and saying what is crazy Noah doing now? Starting an indoor zoo?

There was only one door into that ark. People maybe didn't know it was an ark. They just knew it was a big building, 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, 45 feet high. And they knew it was big.

They knew that streaming in from all over, came these animals. They had watched them go right through the gate of Noah's garden. Sometimes big animals like the elephants, they just barely made it, and some of those little, tiny shrews and stuff just were right there going along, right up that ramp. Then last of all, Noah, his wife, his three sons, each of their wives, came walking in.

People may have shouted, "Hey, what are you doing in there with those animals?" They probably carried on, laughing and scoffing and mocking them. Noah took a moment to stand on the gang plank to look out at them and to say, "I warned you that the God who created this planet is going to kill everything that has life's breath, if you don't come into this ark." Then he went inside. Then it says in Genesis 7:16, the Lord shut the door of the ark. This led to one of the most powerful reminders that:

Salvation is Secure

There must have been a murmur through the crowd, because all of a sudden that doorway, that gangway, all by itself, by the hand of God, slammed shut. And you couldn't even see a door anymore. God just sealed it in. And so they all sat in their lawn chairs.

Inside, it must have been one of the longest seven days in history, because with that loud thud, when the massive entrance of the ark slammed shut, with no other means to exit, other than jumping off from the 45 feet high deck, it was going to be an interesting time inside with all those animals.

DAY ONE: probably passed with the crowds yelling and jeering and calling out for the flood that he promised to happen to happen.

DAY TWO: went by and pretty soon you could smell animal smells coming out of that ark. People probably invited friends to get their lawn chairs and watch.

Probably people, that had been following this incredible river of animals walking quickly and orderly toward the ark, two by two, and crossing Noah's field up the ramp, started showing up to look at the building that Noah had built for 120 years.

DAY THREE: must have really been hard because nothing happened. Talk about a test. Can you imagine Noah in there? Honey, is this the right day? I mean the flood, I mean. It's just us and the animals and all the people out there. It was starting to get a little warm inside the ark. The animals seemed to be quieting down, though. Must be that God let them have a time of hibernation.

DAYS FOUR to SIX: passed with the constant heckling drifting up the walls to the family quarters atop the ark.

DAY SEVEN: But then on day seven, (by the way, the Bible even tells us, day seven was just about November 17th on our calendars) a loud thud was heard on the roof of the ark, and then another. As massive drops of rain for the first time in the history of this planet, water starting falling out of the sky.

Think about what it was like:

On the ground At the flood

A massive splat of water hit Mr. & Mrs. Scoffer sitting in their lawn chairs in their back yard. They have sat here on and off over the last century drinking and jeering that old neighbor and his kids that had gone off the deep end. This guy who lived next door was crazy. He was ruining the neighborhood. His farm was now a construction site.

A massive 450 foot long building, 75 feet deep and nearly five stories high was out in his pasture. When he wasn't out there dragging wood around he would loudly preach to all of the spectators that gathered to watch about some crazy disaster coming. Water was going to fall on us and cover all of us up? He claimed some deity somewhere was offended by our demon worship, drunkenness and murder. Splat, another wet object jarred Mrs. Scoffer awake. She had been dozing after the effects of last night's revelry.

In fact most of the hundreds of milling town's people were still red eyed. It was almost exactly seven days since Noah and all his family went up that ramp into their wooded building.

Some say that the ramp had lifted up by itself and sealed the entrance to this building. But all the people out there knew was that the building had no visible entrance left. All of them were starting to get their mocking banter going when something clear started arriving from the sky.

It was fun at first. The water was cool and drenched them. Then as the tempo increased it became uncomfortable to stand, so they began to retreat out of old Noah's yard and back across the field to their homes. As they walked by the piles of lumber, saws and
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scaffolding the water raining down was like a thick curtain. They suddenly realized they could hardly see to walk.

Then at almost at the same instant, the first blinding white stroke of lightning, something they'd never seen before, flashed. And then, with ashen faces, as the reverberating sound of the thunder shook them, they began to say to one another, "Is this the flood that old Noah was talking about so long?"

The deafening booms and the blinding flashes filled their steps with terror as they all decided not to go home, but to run toward the huge building that Noah had built.

Climbing up the scaffolding, pounding frantically on the place where the door used to be, they only felt their blows absorbed by the thick, hand-sawed gopher wood now daubed with oozing black pitch. As they looked on their hands, covered with that black, they realized that there was no way in. In alternating blackness and blinding flashes and booming explosions, they crawled home.

And Destroyed Them All

Soon the ground began to be covered with water and all their deepest fears were confirmed. The flood had arrived. And they were wrong. Crazy, old Noah knew what he was talking about. God's extinction level event had arrived and they were doomed. As Jesus reminds us:

Luke 17:26-27, 32-33 And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 32 Remember Lot's wife. 33 Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.

Jesus affirmed in this Book we can trust that Noah and the Flood are genuine. God's wrath against sin led to the extinction of all humans but 8 with water, and will again lead to the destruction of all but believers with fire. What is the lesson?

Make sure you are ready.

For the believer Jesus was saying don't get distracted.

For the lost Jesus was saying there are no second chances