

PREFLOOD WITNESSES

A few things of interest about the pre-flood world before we move on. We are going to have to limit all that we say about each of these, because we don't want to disrupt the flow of the scripture here to forget the overall scope of what we are talking about. We are bringing witnesses from Israel's past, even traced through the scriptures that spoke of those that preceded the call of Abraham (Abram) to become a great nation that would become the blessing of all nations.

The first thing to talk about is the time between the creation of Adam and the coming of the flood. These three witnesses we can call the pre-flood witnesses, and there are only these three mentioned.

From the years that are stated in Genesis 5, we can add up the years between Adam and the flood. We can believe God about these years, and as we saw last week, that is what faith is:

"Abraham believed God", Romans 4:3.

Birth to birth	Years stated	Reference in Genesis
Adam to Seth	130	5:3
Seth to Enos	105	5:6
Enos to Cainan	90	5:9
Cainan to Mahalaleel	70	5:12
Mahalaleel to Jared	65	5:15
Jared to Enoch	162	5:18
Enoch to Methusalah	65	5:21
Methusalah to Lamech	187	5:25
Lamech to Noah	182	5:28
Noah to the flood	600	7:11
Total:	1656	

So we see that 1656 years of history of the earth will be witnessed by the faith of these three: Abel, Enoch, and Noah. From the scripture also we see that from the creation of the earth to Adam was 6 days, so we don't need to add any more years.

In addition to the narrative in Genesis, we have in the giving of the law, this:

Exodus 20:11 — *"For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."*

Additionally, we can compare Genesis 1:26-27 with Matthew 19:4 and Mark 10:6. While it is possible to force a distinction between "created" and "made", I do not think it plausible in this case:

Genesis 1:26–27	Matthew 19:4	Mark 10:6
<i>"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."</i>	<i>"And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,"</i>	<i>"But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female."</i>

While I know that there are those that think differently, this is the understanding that goes strictly by "What saith the scripture".

ABEL

Hebrews 11:4 — *"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."*

The first man of faith that is brought to the stand is Abel. Abel is first remembered as being the second person born in human history, and the first man murdered. We know from Genesis chapter 4 that Abel was murdered by his brother Cain, and that is because of a jealousy, that Cain was jealous that Abel's sacrifice was accepted, and that his was not. It is notable too that we have a first in the pattern of the way that the word of God affects the human heart. Remember that we talked about the word of Peter and the Twelve to the men of Israel, that in one case the message caused the hearers to be pricked in their heart, asking "what shall we do", Acts 2:37. This was met with the answer of what they should do:

Acts 2:38 — *"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*

Verse 41 of the same chapter shows that those that believed did exactly that and that about 3000 souls were added to the company of believers.

In Acts 5:33, we have a reaction to the same message, and we read that these too were cut to the heart. The reaction is that those cut to the heart did not act in repentance, they acted in the same way as Cain did toward his brother. They took counsel to slay the apostles. From the beginning to now, we see how the word of God divides as we read in Hebrews 4:12.

A few things regarding Abel's "more excellent" sacrifice:

- This is about faith. It should be understood that if it was by faith that Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice, then both Cain and Abel had a word from God of what that sacrifice should be. *"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* Romans 10:17.

- In Genesis 4:4, we see that Abel brought “of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof”. This was what we would call a blood sacrifice, and we see from the beginning that “*without the shedding of blood, there is no remission*”, Hebrews 9:22.
- Cain brought of the fruit of the ground (Genesis 3:3). The ground was cursed, Genesis 3:17.
- Abel’s sacrifice was accepted because it is what God told him to bring.

The scriptures speak of Abel as righteous. The Lord Jesus had this to say regarding Abel:

Matthew 23:35 — *“That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of **righteous Abel** unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.”*

Luke 11:50-51 has the Lord calling Abel a prophet, and the way that he was a prophet, it is said in this verse in Hebrews that “he being dead yet speaketh”.

One writer had this to say regarding the difference between Cain and Abel:

“One is God’s way, the other is man’s,
One is by faith, the other is by fancy,
One is of grace, the other is of merit,
One is of faith, the other is of works,
One is of Christianity, the other is of religion”⁴³

True faith takes God at His word and does what God says. That was the difference between Cain and Abel. Abel’s blood cried to God from the ground, Genesis 4:10, and it seems that the cry was that of Cain’s guilt and a cry for vengeance. We seem to have that same cry from the souls slain under the altar in Revelation 6:9 when the 5th seal was opened.

We will see that in Hebrews 12:24, that the blood of Jesus Christ, the blood of the new covenant, speaks better things than that of Abel’s blood. Abel’s blood cried out for vengeance, and it will be revenged. But the blood of Christ is that by which any, even the guiltiest, can be brought near to God and is redeemed to Him.

Ephesians 1:7 — *“In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”*

ENOCH

Hebrews 11:5–6 — *“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”*

⁴³ Bullinger, Ethelbert W. *Great Cloud of Witnesses in Hebrews Eleven*. Kregel Publications, 1979.

The citation is from page 36. Bullinger has some good things to say, but frankly, he talks too much and I have yet to be able to read all the way through one of his books. This, however, is a good comparison in this book on Hebrews

There really is not that much said about Enoch in the Bible. In Genesis, we read this, and if there is to be a witness of walking by faith, this is what the Bible says:

Genesis 5:24 — *"And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."*

Enoch is the one figure in Genesis 5 of whom it does not say "and he died".

This makes him mysterious and the stuff of legends. While he is listed in genealogies, there is not much else except that Jude mentions him as prophesying:

Jude 14–15 — *"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."*

We don't really know when he said this, but it seems he was talking about the coming flood and also past the flood to ultimate judgment to come. Enoch was taken before the judgment to come.

What is important about Enoch in this context is that Enoch walked with God, and God rewarded him for it, by taking him without him dying. It is the faith of walking with God that pleases God. The walk of the Israelites under the first covenant was to walk with God by faith in keeping His commandments. The majority never did walk this way, but those that did keep the commandments in faith pleased God. Those that kept the commandments without faith were known as whitewashed tombs (whited sepulchres, Matthew 23:27). The LORD wanted a people that walked by faith in Him, and ultimately those that thought they could walk in works without faith became the greatest enemies of Jesus the Son of God who they crucified in rebellion. Their walk can be seen as a walk in pride and not in faith. That is why we read in Ephesians 2:9, *"Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

NOAH

Hebrews 11:7 — *"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."*

The last man of faith who is a witness from before the flood is actually the man that bridges the pre-flood world with the world that now is. We have no indication that there was ever rain before the flood. We have in Genesis 2:5 that God had not caused it to rain. Noah, looking back 1600+ years could have scoffed, but he believed God.

Noah's faith was evidenced by that he built the ark to save his house. This was Noah's act of saving faith. Noah would not be said to have faith if he just said "I believe you God", and never actually built the ark.

Noah, by believing God became the one who would carry on man. We all can trace our roots to Noah.

After the flood, God gave a covenant to Noah, and to all the earth, saying that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood. And we can know that God will never again destroy the earth with a flood, because God said that He would not. That is the whole purpose of a covenant. To have something to look back to and to see what it is that God actually said.

After the flood, Noah does not show as faithful as before, but that is not the point. God said here that he is the heir of the righteousness which is by faith, so we can see that he was considered faithful even so, because God declared it.

The world that was had been destroyed. Noah and his house were saved. Noah's faith, taking God at His word, caused him to do what God said. Faith today is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved, and it is *"to Him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness"* (Romans 4:5).

Noah's faith was shown in the work that he did. Our faith is shown in ceasing from trying to please God by our merit, and in trusting in the all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ our Lord on the cross, and this faith is counted for righteousness, *"unto all, and upon all them that believe"* (Romans 3:22).