

REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

LOST CIVILIZATIONS

ARE PRE-FLOOD CITIES STILL UNDERWATER?



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REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

ARE PRE-FLOOD CITIES STILL UNDERWATER?

2 Peter 3:3-14

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Bring your questions. Open your Bible.
Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

Aloha.

Welcome to Reason Together Church.

Whether you have been with us from the beginning, whether this is your first visit or whether you are still deciding what you believe, I am genuinely glad that you are here.

At Reason Together Church, we do not believe honest questions are enemies of faith.

We believe honest questions can lead us into a deeper and more careful examination of the Word of God.

Our invitation is simple.

Bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

Let us Reason Together the Word of God.

If you are visiting, please understand that you are our honored guest.

You are not expected to give anything.

If you are a member of another church, we encourage you to support your home church.

For those who call Reason Together Church their church home, there is a giving box available in the back.

We will not pass a plate and we will not interrupt the study to ask you for money.

We want you to be able to listen, think and reason without wondering what will be expected from you next.

There is also a guest card available.

We ask only for your first name and an email address so we can let you know what we will be studying next.

After the service, please remain for coffee and conversation.

The coffee is free.

The refills are free.

And around here, we like to say that the refills on conversation are free as well.

Those are just a few things I wanted you to know before we open the Bible together.

So take a breath, settle in and let us turn our attention to a question that may sound like archaeology at first, but I believe will eventually become very personal for every one of us.

Today we are going beneath the surface of the ocean, back through the pages of human history and ultimately into the account of a world the Bible says disappeared beneath the water.

Our Reason Together question today is:

Are pre-Flood cities still underwater?

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, thank You for allowing us to gather around Your Word.

Thank You for giving us minds that can examine the world You created.

Thank You for every honest archaeologist, geologist, historian and explorer who has helped recover evidence from the past.

Give us humility when the evidence does not fit what we expected.

Give us discernment when a claim goes farther than the evidence permits.

Keep us from dismissing something merely because it challenges our assumptions.

Keep us also from calling speculation a fact merely because it appears to support what we want to believe.

Help us distinguish what is known, what is claimed, what is inferred and what remains unknown.

Most of all, help us hear the warning Your Word gives through the world that then was.

May Jesus Christ be honored in everything taught and everything received.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

We live in what may be the most technologically equipped civilization in human history.

We carry computers in our pockets, place satellites above us and send submarines beneath us.

All of that can quietly produce an assumption.

Because our tools are more advanced, we assume we must be more intelligent than everyone who lived before us.

Newer begins to mean smarter.

Older begins to mean primitive.

Then we look at the Great Pyramid of Giza.

It has stood for thousands of years.

Its builders quarried, transported and positioned millions of stone blocks.

They maintained measurements and coordinated labor across years of construction.

Could modern engineers build another pyramid?

Certainly, if someone supplied enough money, machinery, labor and a reason to do it.

But that is not the most interesting question.

The interesting question is how ancient builders accomplished it with the tools available to them.

We still debate the details of their methods.

We know that they built it because the pyramid is standing in front of us.

The structure survived more completely than the explanation of how it was constructed.

Then we look at Rome.

Some Roman roads, harbors and concrete structures have endured for centuries.

Meanwhile, we sometimes drive over a pothole in a road that was repaired so recently that the orange cones have barely been removed.

That comparison is not entirely fair.

Modern roads carry tremendous traffic and many Roman roads also disappeared, leaving the strongest examples for us to admire.

Nevertheless, modern researchers have discovered something remarkable about Roman concrete.

For a long time, small pieces of lime found in the concrete were sometimes treated as evidence of careless mixing.

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and other institutions found that those lime-rich pieces could help certain Roman concrete repair cracks when water entered them.

What looked like poor workmanship helped produce durability.

Modern researchers are now learning from a technique ancient builders used long ago.

That should make us careful about using the word primitive.

Something may look crude because we do not understand what its maker was doing.

Someone may lack our machinery while possessing knowledge we have forgotten.

Technology can accumulate and knowledge can disappear across generations.

Owning more tools does not mean that every modern person understands more than every ancient person.

Most of us use a cellular telephone every day.

Very few of us could build one if every factory, manual and specialist disappeared tomorrow.

Now take that thought beneath the ocean.

There are places where divers swim over foundations, walls and roads upon which people once lived and walked.

Some of those sites are unquestionably human settlements.

Others look constructed but remain disputed.

Still others are known primarily through ancient stories.

The existence of underwater settlements surprises no one.

Water levels change, land subsides, earthquakes occur and coastlines move.

But the question becomes more interesting when a structure appears older, deeper or more sophisticated than the accepted history would lead us to expect.

Could such a discovery reveal that ancient people possessed abilities we have underestimated?

Could a catastrophic event erase an advanced civilization and leave later survivors appearing simpler than the people who came before them?

Could any ruins beneath today's oceans belong to the world before Noah?

Before we look beneath the water, we need to look into the Bible.

Genesis chapter one, verse twenty-six says:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

Verse twenty-seven continues:

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

The image of God involves far more than intelligence, but it certainly includes a unique capacity for relationship, responsibility and dominion within creation.

But it certainly does not describe a creature waiting to become genuinely human.

Adam could understand God, cultivate the garden, name animals, recognize marriage and exercise moral choice.

Humanity did not begin in Genesis as mentally incomplete.

Humanity began capable and accountable.

The tragedy of Genesis is not that people lacked intelligence.

The tragedy is that intelligent people used their God-given freedom to disobey the God who made them.

That distinction matters when we come to Genesis chapter four.

Genesis 4:16 says:

"And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden."

The next verse says:

"And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch."

Cain built a city before Noah's Flood.

The Bible does not tell us how large it was.

It does not describe its walls.

It does not identify its streets.

It does not provide coordinates that would allow us to search for it.

The word city in the ancient world did not always mean a population of millions and may describe an organized community much smaller than Honolulu.

We should not make the city larger than Scripture makes it.

We should not make it smaller merely because it does not fit our mental picture.

Genesis deliberately tells us that Cain built a city.

Even a modest city requires planning.

It requires materials.

It requires labor.

It requires food and water.

It requires communication.

It requires people to cooperate long enough to construct something larger than one person could build alone.

This gives us our first archaeological question.

If Cain built a city before the Flood, where is it now?

It may have been pulverized, buried, scattered, submerged or made impossible for us ever to identify.

The Bible never promises that Cain's city will be found.

Its disappearance does not make its former existence unimportant.

Genesis then tells us more about the development of human culture.

Genesis 4:20 identifies Jabal as "the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle."

Verse twenty-one identifies Jubal as "the father of all such as handle the harp and organ."

Verse twenty-two tells us that Tubal-cain was "an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron."

The exact metal intended by the word translated brass can be discussed.

The larger point is clear.

The Bible presents livestock specialization, music, craftsmanship and metalworking before the Flood.

Different people became known for different fields of activity.

Specialization requires teaching, tools, materials and a society capable of supporting people while they learn a trade.

Music requires artistic imagination and craftsmanship, while metalworking requires material, controlled heat and accumulated experience.

Genesis does not say that pre-Flood people had electric lights, aircraft or computers.

We should not replace the image of a caveman with a science fiction story.

But the Biblical record does not permit us to treat pre-Flood humanity as unintelligent.

These were human beings created in the image of God.

They could think.

They could create.

They could organize.

They could build.

That does not mean everything they built was righteous.

Human capability and human goodness are not the same thing.

Genesis chapter six says the earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence.

The people who developed culture also developed corruption, and the people who built cities did not build a civilization that honored God.

God told Noah in Genesis 6:13:

"The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

Then Genesis 7:11 says:

"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."

The Flood involved more than ordinary rainfall.

The fountains of the great deep were broken up.

The windows of heaven were opened.

The waters prevailed upon the earth.

The highest hills under the whole heaven were covered.

The world Cain and his descendants knew did not merely become wet for a few days and then return unchanged.

Second Peter calls it "the world that then was."

That world perished beneath the water.

Cities, roads, farms, mines, workshops, tools, records and entire systems that allowed knowledge to be used could vanish.

This helps us understand an important difference.

Knowledge is not the same thing as infrastructure.

Noah and his family may have carried considerable knowledge through the Flood.

But knowing how to do something does not mean possessing everything required to do it.

A survivor may remember architecture, weaving or metalworking while lacking the quarries, fibers, mines, furnaces and labor needed to use that knowledge.

A family of eight people cannot instantly reproduce every specialized occupation of a large civilization.

Imagine that every factory on earth disappeared tonight.

Imagine that every power plant, road, mine, library and computer server disappeared with it.

The survivors might remember automobiles and one might even be a mechanic, but eight people could not manufacture an automobile the following week.

They would first need shelter, food, raw material, tools and a population large enough to support specialists.

The survivors would not become less intelligent.

Their civilization would become less capable because its supporting systems had disappeared.

That creates another possibility we must consider.

A simpler culture after a catastrophe does not prove the culture before it was equally simple.

Human history may include development, destruction, loss and rebuilding rather than a smooth staircase from primitive to advanced.

Genesis gives us an example of rebuilding in chapter eleven.

The descendants of Noah shared one language.

They settled in the land of Shinar.

Genesis 11:3 says:

"Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly."

The verse says they had brick for stone and slime for mortar.

They manufactured building material, organized a city, planned a tower and intended to make themselves a name.

Their purpose was rebellion, but their capability was real.

In Genesis 11:6, the Lord said:

"Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."

God was not saying human beings had become all-powerful.

He was recognizing the formidable effect of human imagination, common language and organized cooperation.

The people at Babel did not need to evolve intelligence after the Flood.

They already possessed human intelligence.

They needed population, materials and organization.

As those returned, monumental construction returned with them.

This is the Biblical picture we carry into underwater archaeology.

Humanity began capable.

Civilization developed early.

Catastrophic judgment interrupted it.

Survivors rebuilt.

Now we ask whether anything from a former settlement could remain beneath today's water.

Underwater archaeology presents a special difficulty.

It rarely preserves a complete city exactly as its citizens knew it.

Stone foundations, roads, harbor blocks and pottery may remain while wooden walls, roofs, boats and textiles disappear.

An object buried rapidly in sediment may be protected while an exposed object is destroyed by currents and marine life.

Immersion can preserve material or allow salt water, organisms and movement to destroy it.

What we find is a filtered portion of the past.

We must not confuse the portion that survived with the full extent of what people knew.

If a civilization built most of its homes from wood, thousands of years might leave us only stone foundations.

If it recorded knowledge upon material that decayed, the absence of a library would not prove it could not write.

If its tools were removed, reused or corroded, the remaining wall might outlive every instrument used to construct it.

This is why an archaeological site must be examined carefully.

For each location, we should ask four simple questions.

What is known?

What is claimed?

What has been inferred?

What remains unknown?

We begin with locations that are unquestionably human settlements.

Off the coast of Israel lies Atlit-Yam.

Archaeologists have identified structures and preserved evidence of a community now beneath the Mediterranean.

The foundations and other evidence establish it as a genuine submerged settlement.

Does that make it pre-Flood?

No.

Its conventional date and archaeological interpretation place it within a later period of human history.

Its importance to our study is more limited but still valuable.

Atlit-Yam proves that a human settlement can become submerged and remain discoverable.

Near the coast of southern Greece lies Pavlopetri.

Its underwater remains include recognizable streets, foundations, courtyards and graves forming an identifiable town plan.

Pavlopetri is conventionally associated with the Bronze Age and would ordinarily be placed after the Flood in a Biblical chronology.

Again, it does not prove we have found a pre-Flood city.

It gives us a comparison.

This is what clearly human underwater construction can look like.

Beneath the North Sea lies a much larger lost landscape commonly called Doggerland.

Land once connected Britain with continental Europe, with rivers, animals and human occupation upon a landscape now beneath the sea.

Doggerland reminds us that we are not discussing only one building slipping beneath the waves.

Large inhabited regions can become part of the seafloor.

Submerged settlements have also been found around portions of the Black Sea.

Some writers have attempted to connect a catastrophic rise of the Black Sea with Noah's Flood.

That proposal may attempt to explain the Biblical account as a large regional event.

Genesis describes something far greater than one regional basin.

We should not reduce Noah's Flood to the Black Sea merely because the Black Sea experienced flooding.

The submerged sites still show that regional water changes can erase coastlines and overwhelm settlements.

The confirmed sites establish a fact.

Underwater human settlements are real.

They do not establish that any identified underwater site belonged to the pre-Flood world.

Now we come to the disputed locations.

The most famous lost civilization is Atlantis.

Atlantis does not come from the Bible.

Its best-known ancient source is Plato.

In the dialogues called Timaeus and Critias, Plato described a powerful island civilization associated with a location beyond the Pillars of Heracles.

It possessed wealth, organization and military power, experienced moral decline and disappeared beneath the sea after earthquakes and inundation.

What should we do with that account?

One possibility is that Plato created Atlantis as a philosophical story.

The civilization demonstrates pride, corruption and the downfall of a powerful society.

Another possibility is that Plato shaped a memory of a real regional catastrophe.

Perhaps an island, harbor or coastal civilization was destroyed and the account grew as it passed through generations.

A third possibility is that the story contains a distant and greatly altered memory of a much older destroyed world.

If all post-Flood humanity descended from Noah's family, memories of the former world could travel with them.

As languages divided and cultures separated, the memory of a civilization destroyed beneath water might remain even when names and details changed.

That is possible.

It is not proven.

We must not open Genesis, write Atlantis into the margin and then announce that the Bible names it.

Genesis never calls Cain's city Atlantis.

Plato wrote long after the Flood.

His account must be evaluated on its own evidence.

But it raises a reasonable question.

Could an ancient culture remember a destroyed civilization even when the memory had become mixed with philosophy, politics and legend?

The possibility keeps people looking for a physical location.

That brings us to the Bimini Road.

Near North Bimini in the Bahamas lies a long underwater formation made of large limestone blocks.

Some blocks appear roughly rectangular.

The formation has been compared to a road, pavement, wall, harbor feature or breakwater.

Photographs taken from certain angles can look remarkably architectural.

Some people have connected Bimini with Atlantis.

Most geologists who have studied the formation identify it as natural beachrock.

In that explanation, beach material became cemented into rock.

Natural fractures divided the rock into blocks.

Erosion and settling helped produce the arrangement visible today.

Natural rock can form straight lines.

Natural rock can fracture at angles.

Something looking constructed does not prove someone constructed it.

Supporters of a human explanation raise additional questions.

Could some stones have been arranged, supported or modified by people using a natural formation as part of an ancient harbor?

Those are fair questions.

The decisive evidence would include unmistakable tool marks, joined construction, secure artifacts or an archaeological context showing human occupation connected with the formation.

At present, Bimini remains intriguing rather than conclusive.

Even if tomorrow someone proved that human beings arranged every block, that would answer only the first question.

We would still need to ask who built it, when it was built and whether it belonged to a pre-Flood world or a later coastal culture.

The same discipline is necessary at Yonaguni in Japan.

Beneath the water lies an enormous formation with terraces, straight edges, channels and surfaces resembling steps.

Some researchers believe it was constructed or modified by people.

Others observe that the local sandstone fractures along planes and that similar shapes appear above water in the same region.

It may be natural.

It may be a natural formation people later used or modified.

It may contain artificial features not yet conclusively demonstrated.

The formation deserves examination.

It does not deserve a verdict before the evidence arrives.

Far deeper beneath the water off western Cuba, sonar surveys reportedly detected large symmetrical forms.

Some observers described shapes resembling pyramids, roads or an urban complex.

The extraordinary depth makes the claim fascinating.

If an unquestionably human city were discovered approximately two thousand feet beneath the sea, ordinary shoreline change would not provide a simple explanation.

But sonar resemblance is not an excavated city.

Limited direct investigation leaves fundamental questions unanswered.

Are the shapes geological, or are there joined walls and artifacts in place?

Without those answers, the Cuban formation remains a question rather than a discovery of Atlantis.

In the Gulf of Khambhat in India, sonar patterns and recovered objects have also produced claims of an extremely ancient city.

The difficulty is archaeological context.

Strong currents can move objects.

Dredging can recover material without showing precisely where it rested or how it arrived there.

An old piece of wood found in the same general body of water does not automatically date a structure seen on sonar.

The object might be old while the structure is younger, or it might have traveled from somewhere else.

This does not mean the claim must be false.

It means the evidence must connect the artifact, the structure and the date.

Near Dwarka, ancient Indian traditions describe a city overtaken by the sea.

Underwater investigators have found anchors, structures and evidence of ancient maritime activity in the region.

The existence of archaeology does not automatically prove every detail of the tradition.

Several communities may have occupied the area at different times.

A later settlement might stand near an older one.

A real submerged location may become associated with a story larger than the physical evidence supports.

Yet traditions of cities swallowed by water should not be discarded merely because they contain religious or legendary elements.

They should be compared with the archaeology carefully.

We now have several different kinds of evidence before us.

Atlit-Yam and Pavlopetri are confirmed settlements.

Doggerland is a confirmed submerged landscape.

Bimini and Yonaguni are real formations whose human origin or modification is disputed.

The Cuban formations and Khambhat rely heavily upon sonar claims and limited contextual evidence.

Atlantis is an ancient literary account without an agreed physical location.

These categories should not be blended together.

A confirmed town is not automatically pre-Flood, a disputed formation is not automatically a city and an ancient story is not automatically fiction.

Honesty allows us to remain interested without pretending certainty.

So, are pre-Flood cities still underwater?

They may be.

Genesis permits the possibility, and confirmed submerged settlements show that human structures can survive beneath the water.

But no known underwater site can presently be identified conclusively as a city from before Noah's Flood.

That answer keeps the question open without making the evidence say more than it says.

Now return to the question of human capability.

Would finding an ancient underwater city disprove evolution?

Not merely by being a city.

Evolutionary anthropology does not claim that the Egyptians or Romans had the intelligence of animals.

They were human beings with human minds.

Most conventional researchers already recognize art, planning and complex tools among very early human populations.

We should challenge what a theory actually says rather than a weak version no informed person holds.

But archaeology can challenge a timetable.

It can challenge the popular story that human history is a smooth climb from barely capable creatures to intelligent modern people.

It can demonstrate sophisticated activity earlier than experts expected.

Gobekli Tepe in modern Turkey provides an example on land.

Its monumental stone structures were constructed by people conventionally classified within an early hunter-gatherer period.

The discovery required scholars to take seriously large-scale organization, specialized craftsmanship and monumental construction earlier than many had expected.

Researchers did not abandon evolution.

They revised their understanding of what people within that period could accomplish.

An unquestionably artificial underwater city securely dated earlier than accepted urban civilization could force another revision.

It would need more than impressive photographs.

The formation would need to be human-made.

Its construction would need to demonstrate genuine planning.

Artifacts would need to remain in their original context.

The date would need to belong to the construction rather than to a shell, marine growth or object deposited later.

The method and assumptions used to calculate that date would need to be examined.

That connects directly with our previous study about Carbon-14 dating.

The measurement may be real.

The relationship between the dated sample and the structure must still be established.

If those requirements were met, the discovery could move the accepted beginning of complex civilization.

Would everyone then accept Genesis?

Probably not.

Historical models would be revised to include a more capable early population.

That is how models often respond to evidence.

The discovery would not force one interpretation upon every observer.

It would reveal that earlier assumptions about human capability were incomplete.

The Biblical model already expects capable humanity near the beginning.

Genesis does not describe intelligence slowly emerging.

It describes intelligence being used for worship and rebellion, cultivation and violence, instruments and weapons, cities and towers.

The Bible also allows knowledge to be lost.

Human history can move forward or backward as civilizations collapse, languages divide, records burn and specialists die without training replacements.

Later generations can rediscover an idea and call it new.

The question is not whether ancient people were universally smarter than we are.

They were not superhuman.

They became tired.

They made mistakes.

Some ancient structures failed and left no impressive ruins.

The question is whether we have underestimated them because their machines did not resemble ours.

The question is whether we have treated technology as though it were intelligence.

The question is whether catastrophe removed evidence that would have changed our reconstruction of the past.

At this point, someone may reasonably ask why any of this matters spiritually.

Suppose we find a city beneath the sea.

It proves people built a city and the city became submerged.

Why dedicate an entire Reason Together Study to that observation?

The answer is found in Second Peter chapter three.

Peter is not primarily discussing archaeology.

He is discussing the return of Christ, the judgment of God and the assumptions people use to dismiss both.

Beginning in verse three, Peter writes:

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Listen carefully to their argument.

Christ has not returned, the fathers have died and life continues, so they conclude tomorrow must be ordinary because yesterday was ordinary.

They interpret continuity as permanence.

They interpret delay as cancellation.

They assume the world has always operated without decisive intervention from God.

Peter answers in verse five:

"For this they willingly are ignorant of."

That expression goes beyond simply lacking information.

Peter describes an ignorance connected with the will.

The evidence excluded from their history is inconvenient to the conclusion they desire.

Peter continues:

"That by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

Peter answers skepticism about the future by directing attention to the past.

God created by His Word and judged the former world by water, so history has not always continued without divine intervention.

The people before the Flood also experienced ordinary days.

They ate.

They worked.

They married.

They built.

They assumed another day would follow.

Then the world that then was perished.

This is where a lost city becomes more than an archaeological curiosity.

Its importance is not merely that ancient people knew how to stack stones.

Its importance is that people built for a tomorrow that did not arrive as they expected.

They walked streets, occupied homes and established communities upon land that may now lie beneath water or sediment.

The stones may have survived.

The civilization did not.

Peter continues in verse seven:

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

The former world and the present world are connected by the authority of God's Word.

The same God who judged before has promised judgment again.

The Flood is not a prediction that Atlantis must be found before Christ returns.

Bimini is not identified in Scripture as a sign of the end times.

Sonar technology is not the fulfillment of a verse about underwater cities.

The end-times connection is stronger than that.

Peter says that people in the last days will doubt future judgment by excluding past judgment from the way they understand history.

The Flood is God's answer to the assumption that the present world must continue because it appears stable today.

Then Peter explains why the promised judgment has not yet arrived.

Second Peter 3:8 says:

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Verse nine continues:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

The delay is not evidence that God forgot.

The delay is mercy.

God's patience is not His absence or approval of sin, but an opportunity for repentance.

The people in Noah's day also experienced a period of patience.

The Ark was constructed while ordinary life continued around it.

Every day before the rain was another opportunity to believe the warning of God.

Eventually, the door was shut.

Jesus made the same connection in Matthew chapter twenty-four.

He said:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Eating was not their sin.

Marriage was not their sin.

The danger was not ordinary life.

The danger was allowing ordinary life to convince them that judgment could never interrupt it.

They mistook routine for security.

We can do the same thing.

We build homes, plan careers, prepare for retirement and schedule next month.

None of those things is wrong.

But tomorrow is not guaranteed merely because we placed it on a calendar.

Our cities are not permanent merely because they are made of concrete and steel.

Our technology cannot prevent the return of Christ.

Our intelligence cannot remove our accountability to God.

That is why the study cannot end with Atlantis.

It cannot end with Bimini.

It cannot end with a debate about whether Yonaguni is natural sandstone.

Peter asks a personal question in verse eleven:

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

Peter does not ask who won the archaeological argument.

He asks what manner of persons we ought to be.

If the former world perished, how should we live in the present world?

If Christ will return, where should we place our trust?

If God's patience is giving us time to repent, what are we doing with that time?

The inhabitants of every lost city had possessions they considered valuable.

They had plans they considered important.

They had buildings they considered secure.

Some of their stones remain beneath the water.

They do not.

Hebrews 13:14 says:

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

The Bible begins its account of fallen human civilization with Cain building a city after going out from the presence of the Lord.

Later, Babel built a city to make humanity a name.

Human kingdoms repeatedly trusted walls, towers, armies and wealth.

The Bible ends with a city God provides for His redeemed people.

Human cities can be buried, burned, conquered, abandoned or submerged.

God's promised city will endure.

Perhaps Bimini is entirely natural beachrock.

Perhaps Yonaguni is a natural formation that ancient people admired or modified.

Perhaps the Cuban sonar images will eventually prove to be geology.

Perhaps Atlantis was Plato's philosophical story.

Perhaps it preserved a distorted memory of a real catastrophe.

Perhaps future explorers will discover walls and streets that force us to reconsider how early organized civilization began.

Perhaps somewhere beneath miles of ocean, sediment or later geological formation are remnants last seen by the generation of Noah.

We may never identify one conclusively.

But we do not need to locate Cain's city to receive Noah's warning.

The Bible already tells us that capable humanity built, became violent and corrupt and saw the world that then was perish beneath water.

It also tells us the present world will not continue forever.

Our greatest problem is not that historians may have placed the beginning of cities in the wrong century.

Our greatest problem is sin.

The same human imagination that produces music, architecture and technology also produces pride, violence and rebellion.

Greater intelligence does not make humanity righteous.

Better engineering cannot reconcile us to God.

Noah did not survive because he understood every geological process involved in the Flood.

Noah believed God and entered the refuge God provided.

The Ark was not Noah's idea for improving society.

It was God's provision for salvation through the judgment that was coming.

Today our refuge is not a wooden vessel.

Our refuge is Jesus Christ.

The Bible says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

That includes archaeologists.

That includes scientists.

That includes creationists.

That includes preachers.

That includes every person listening today.

God is holy.

We have sinned against Him.

We cannot build our way back into His presence.

We cannot educate ourselves into forgiveness.

We cannot wait for another discovery to solve our guilt.

But God did not leave us without hope.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into this world.

He lived without sin.

He died upon the cross and bore the judgment our sins deserved.

He was buried.

On the third day, He rose again.

Salvation is received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

It is not received by finding Atlantis.

It is not received by choosing the correct geological model.

It is not received by becoming more moral than the people around us.

It is received by turning from our sin and placing our trust in Christ.

If you recognize your sin and understand that you cannot save yourself, you can call upon Him today.

The prayer I am about to offer is not a magical collection of words.

Repeating after a pastor does not save anyone.

Jesus saves the person who genuinely repents and places his or her trust in Him.

If that is the desire of your heart, you may pray quietly with me.

Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner.

I know that I cannot save myself.

I believe that You died for my sins.

I believe that You were buried and rose again.

I turn from trusting myself and place my faith in You.

Please forgive me, save me and make me Your own.

Thank You for the gift of eternal life.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

If you prayed that prayer and meant it, please speak with me before you leave.

I would be honored to pray with you, answer your questions and help you understand what comes next.

For everyone here, this conversation should not end because the sermon is almost over.

During the coming week, read Genesis chapters four, six, seven and eleven.

Then read Second Peter chapter three and Matthew chapter twenty-four.

Notice how Scripture connects human capability, corruption, judgment, patience and the return of Christ.

When you see a report about an underwater city, ask four questions.

What is known?

What is claimed?

What has been inferred?

What remains unknown?

Do not be afraid of unanswered questions.

Do not fill every unknown space with the answer you prefer.

Allow evidence to remain uncertain where it is uncertain.

Stand firmly where the Word of God has spoken.

The Grand Canyon, the breaking of the fountains of the deep and reports of unusual artifacts found within the Canyon deserve a separate study.

We will save those questions for another conversation rather than forcing them into this one.

If you disagree with something I said today, please do not leave with the disagreement silently growing into frustration.

Bring the question upstairs.

Let us open the Bible.

Let us examine the evidence.

Let us talk over coffee.

The coffee is free and the refills on conversation remain free.

If a question returns on Tuesday afternoon instead of Sunday morning, you do not need to wait until the next service.

Please contact me.

If this study has made you wonder whether faith and archaeology are pulling in opposite directions, I would be honored to talk and pray with you.

This church exists for more than a weekly presentation.

We want to walk together, reason together and help one another grow in Christ.

Let us close in prayer.

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word.

Thank You for creating humanity in Your image.

Thank You for the intelligence, imagination and creativity You have permitted people to exercise.

Forgive us for using Your gifts in pride and rebellion.

Give us humility when we examine ancient accomplishments.

Keep us from assuming that possessing newer tools makes us wiser people.

Give archaeologists, historians and researchers skill as they investigate places hidden beneath the water.

Protect them from exaggeration and protect us from repeating exciting claims before they have been established.

Help us recognize evidence that challenges assumptions we have become comfortable believing.

Where a structure is natural, help us say so honestly.

Where human work is evident, help us recognize it accurately.

Where the answer remains uncertain, give us patience to leave it open.

Thank You for preserving Noah and his family through the Flood.

Thank You for the warning contained in the world that then was.

Do not allow us to mistake Your patience for Your absence.

Do not allow us to interpret the delay of Christ's return as the cancellation of His promise.

Teach us to live in holy conversation and godliness.

Help us remember that here we have no continuing city.

Fix our hope upon Jesus Christ and the city You have prepared.

Bring conviction and salvation to anyone who has heard the gospel today.

Watch over every person as we leave this place.

Carry this conversation into our homes and into the coming week.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

The stones may have survived.

The civilization did not.

Let that warning remain with us throughout the coming week.

Thank you for reasoning together with us today.

Please remain for coffee, questions and conversation.

Aloha Nui Loa.

REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

COMMENTARY

ARE PRE-FLOOD CITIES STILL UNDERWATER?

A Biblical, Archaeological and Pastoral Commentary

Genesis 4:16-22; Genesis 6-7; 2 Peter 3:3-14 (KJV)

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Bring your questions. Open your Bible.

Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

Commentary Introduction

The title question invites imagination. Somewhere beneath water, sand or later geological formation, could remnants of a city from the world before Noah still exist? Genesis permits that possibility. Cain built a city before the Flood, early culture included specialized work, music and metalworking and the Flood destroyed the world those people knew. Yet permission is not identification. No presently known underwater site can be demonstrated conclusively to be Cain's city or another pre-Flood settlement.

This Commentary therefore follows two commitments at the same time. It receives the Biblical account as history and it refuses to make archaeological evidence say more than the evidence establishes. Confirmed submerged settlements show that inhabited places can survive beneath water. Disputed formations keep important questions open. Neither category gives us permission to attach a Biblical name or date without a defensible chain of evidence.

The deeper purpose is not to prove that ancient people could stack stones. Scripture already presents humanity as capable from the beginning. The spiritual question is what happens when capable people trust their achievements more than their Creator. Second Peter points to "the world that then was" because past judgment warns the present world that routine is not permanence, delay is not cancellation and human progress cannot remove accountability to God.

CONTROLLING PRINCIPLE

The stones may have survived. The civilization did not. Archaeology can recover evidence of human skill, but only Scripture explains why the former world matters to the present one.

Commentary in Brief

The responsible answer to the cover question is: pre-Flood cities may still exist beneath water or sediment, but none has been conclusively identified. Atlit-Yam and Pavlopetri are real submerged settlements. Doggerland was a large inhabited landscape. These finds establish preservation and loss, not a pre-Flood date. Bimini and Yonaguni have substantial natural explanations. Claims involving deep-water sonar off Cuba and the Gulf of Khambhat remain limited by direct verification or archaeological context. Atlantis belongs first to Plato's literary account, not to Genesis.

Ancient construction does not show that every earlier civilization possessed modern machinery. It does show that human intelligence must not be confused with the tools accumulated by a society. The Great Pyramid, Roman concrete and Gobekli Tepe demonstrate planning, craftsmanship and organization that deserve respect. Catastrophe can destroy population and infrastructure without reducing the intelligence of survivors.

The end-times connection is not that the recovery of an underwater ruin fulfills a specific prophecy. Scripture gives no such sign. The connection is Peter's argument in 2 Peter 3: people dismiss future judgment by excluding divine action from their understanding of the past. The Flood answers that assumption. God has intervened in history and the present world is accountable to the same Word.

RESPONSIBLE ANSWER

Genesis makes pre-Flood cities expected, but it does not give us their coordinates. Confirmed submerged sites establish what can happen. They do not establish when Noah's world will be found.

1. Humanity Began Capable

Genesis 1:26-27

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

The image of God is richer than intelligence, but it includes the capacities required for relationship, dominion, communication and moral responsibility. Adam understands instruction, cultivates the garden, names animals, recognizes marriage and answers for disobedience. Genesis does not present humanity as waiting to become genuinely human. Humanity begins capable and accountable.

This distinction prevents two errors. We should not describe early people as animal-minded merely because their tools were different from ours. We should also not imagine them as superhuman beings possessing every technology modern people possess. Scripture gives us full humanity from the beginning, not science fiction.

BIBLICAL STARTING POINT

Human value does not begin when people learn to build impressive structures. Human value begins with the image of God.

2. Cain Built a City Before the Flood

Genesis 4:17

And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.

The word translated city need not describe a modern metropolis. Genesis does not tell us its population, walls, street plan or geographical coordinates. The text nevertheless makes organized settlement part of the pre-Flood world. Even a modest city requires materials, labor, water, food, planning and cooperation.

Cain's city is also morally significant. It was built after Cain "went out from the presence of the LORD." The first city named in fallen human history is connected with capability outside fellowship with God. Architecture can organize human life, but it cannot restore the presence sin has forfeited.

3. Specialization Before the Flood

Genesis 4:20-22

And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ... Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron.

Genesis places livestock specialization, musical culture and metal craftsmanship before the Flood. These activities involve teaching, accumulated experience, tools and a society able to support distinct occupations. The precise metallurgical details may be debated, but the larger picture is clear: the Biblical pre-Flood world was culturally developed.

The passage does not establish electricity, aircraft or industrial machinery. Its importance is more careful. Early human beings could observe, invent, teach, create and organize. The Bible does not require the stereotype of a mindless caveman.

4. Capability Did Not Produce Righteousness

Genesis 6:11-13

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence... The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Genesis places cultural achievement beside moral corruption. The people who developed cities, music and metalworking also filled the earth with violence. This is essential to the study. Intelligence can enlarge worship, service and stewardship. The same intelligence can enlarge pride, exploitation and rebellion.

Archaeological sophistication cannot reconcile humanity to God. A civilization may produce beautiful music, strong concrete and precise stonework while remaining spiritually lost. Progress in capability is not the same thing as progress in holiness.

5. What the Flood Changes Archaeologically

Genesis 7:11

The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

Within the Biblical account, the Flood was not a normal coastal inundation. The waters prevailed, the high hills were covered and the former inhabited world perished. Cities, farms, mines, workshops, roads and records could be pulverized, transported, deeply buried, chemically altered or incorporated into later geology.

Destruction does not require every stone to cease existing. Durable foundations may survive while wood, textiles, tools and written records disappear. A structure may remain while the evidence needed to date and identify it is lost. The Flood therefore makes recognizable survival uncertain, not impossible by definition.

Knowledge and infrastructure are different

Noah's family could preserve knowledge while losing the population and systems needed to apply it. A mechanic who survives the destruction of every mine, refinery, factory and power plant does not become less intelligent. He becomes less able to manufacture an automobile. A family of eight must first secure food, shelter, tools and materials before rebuilding specialized civilization.

IMPORTANT DISTINCTION

A simpler society after catastrophe does not prove that the people before it possessed simpler minds.

6. Reading Underwater Evidence Carefully

Underwater archaeology recovers a filtered portion of the past. Stone may endure while roofs disappear. Sediment may preserve one area while currents scour another. Pottery may remain after tools have corroded or been carried away. The absence of a complete city plan is not proof that no settlement existed, while a geometric shape is not proof that people built it.

Four questions keep the discussion honest:

- What is known through direct observation and documented context?
- What is claimed by investigators, advocates or popular reports?
- What has been inferred from the evidence?

What remains unknown or unverified?

A fifth question is often decisive: what evidence would change the conclusion? A claim that cannot be tested, corrected or disproved is not strengthened by repeated photographs or dramatic narration.

Evidence level	Appropriate statement
Known	The observation is documented directly: material, location, relationship and context.
Claimed	A person or organization has proposed an explanation that still requires testing.
Inferred	The conclusion reasonably connects observations but is not itself directly observed.
Unknown	The available evidence does not presently permit a responsible conclusion.

7. Confirmed Submerged Settlements and Landscapes

Atlit-Yam

Off the coast of Israel, Atlit-Yam preserves foundations, burials, wells and evidence of a community beneath the Mediterranean. It is a genuine archaeological settlement. Within conventional chronology it is assigned to the Neolithic period. Its importance here is not that it has been shown to be pre-Flood. It demonstrates that an inhabited place can become submerged and remain archaeologically discoverable.

Pavlopetri

Near southern Greece, Pavlopetri preserves recognizable streets, buildings, courtyards and graves. Its town plan supplies a comparison for clearly human construction beneath the sea. It is conventionally associated with the Bronze Age and would ordinarily be placed after the Flood in a Biblical chronology.

Doggerland and the Black Sea

Doggerland was a broad inhabited landscape where the North Sea now lies. Submerged sites around the Black Sea likewise show that former coastlines and settlements can disappear beneath later water. These places are important evidence of drowned human landscapes. They should not automatically be equated with Noah's Flood. A regional inundation does not match the scope Genesis describes simply because it was catastrophic to the people who experienced it.

WHAT CONFIRMED SITES ESTABLISH

Human settlements and inhabited landscapes exist beneath present water. Preservation is possible. Neither fact identifies a discovered site as pre-Flood.

8. Atlantis: A Story That Must Not Become a Shortcut

The earliest detailed surviving account of Atlantis appears in Plato's Timaeus and Critias. Plato describes an island power beyond the Pillars of Heracles, moral decline, war and disappearance through earthquake and flood. Atlantis is not named in Genesis or elsewhere in Scripture.

Plato may have used history, transformed memory, philosophical invention or a mixture of these. That is a legitimate historical question. It is not legitimate to identify Atlantis as Cain's city merely because both involve an ancient city and catastrophe. Similarity supplies a question, not a chain of identification.

9. Bimini Road

The Bimini Road near North Bimini consists of large, roughly rectangular limestone blocks. Its roadlike appearance has encouraged interpretations as a wall, harbor, pavement or remnant of Atlantis. Geological study identifies the material as beachrock that can fracture along joints, erode and settle into blocklike patterns.

It remains logically possible that people used or modified a natural feature. Establishing that possibility would require construction relationships, tool marks, secure artifacts or occupation evidence tied directly to the blocks. At present, a strong natural explanation exists and human construction has not been established.

SERMON-SAFE LANGUAGE

Bimini is a real formation with a strong natural beachrock explanation. It should not be announced as a road to Atlantis.

10. Yonaguni Monument

Yonaguni is a large underwater sandstone and mudstone formation near Japan. Terraces, channels, steps and straight edges create an architectural impression. Some investigators argue for construction or substantial human modification. Other geologists emphasize bedding planes, joints, earthquakes, weathering and similar formations visible onshore.

The responsible classification is disputed formation with a substantial natural explanation. Limited human use or modification remains a narrower possibility. Calling the entire feature a proven city or pyramid goes farther than the evidence permits.

11. Cuba, Khambhat and Dwarka

Deep-water sonar off Cuba

Survey reports described symmetrical sonar forms at great depth off western Cuba. Popular accounts compared them with pyramids, streets and a city. Sonar can identify targets, but an acoustic pattern is not the same thing as excavated architecture. The extraordinary depth increases the need for direct geological and archaeological verification. Until cores, close imagery, samples and construction relationships are publicly established, the forms remain unverified.

The Gulf of Khambhat

Investigators reported geometric sonar patterns and recovered material through dredging in the Gulf of Khambhat. A piece of wood received a very old conventional radiocarbon date. The problem is archaeological association. Strong currents and dredging can mix objects from different locations and layers. Dating loose wood does not date a sonar feature unless the wood is demonstrably connected with its construction or occupation.

Dwarka

Underwater investigation near Dwarka and Bet Dwarka has recovered anchors, dressed stone and evidence of maritime activity. Ancient tradition associates Dwarka with a city overtaken by the sea. Archaeology can establish coastal occupation and submerged structures without confirming every detail or date in a tradition. Several settlements may occupy the same coastline across different periods.

12. A Site-by-Site Classification

Location	What is secure	What is not established
Atlit-Yam	A genuine submerged settlement with preserved community evidence.	A pre-Flood identification.
Pavlopetri	A recognizable town plan with streets and buildings.	A connection with Noah's world.
Doggerland	A former inhabited landscape beneath the North Sea.	One recovered pre-Flood city.
Atlantis	An ancient literary account in Plato.	A Biblical identity or agreed physical location.
Bimini	A real beachrock formation with blocklike geometry.	A constructed road or Atlantis.
Yonaguni	A real formation with striking geometric features.	A confirmed city or constructed pyramid.
Cuba	Reported deep-water sonar anomalies.	Verified architecture.
Khambhat	Reported sonar patterns and dredged material.	Secure association between dated material and a city.
Dwarka	Documented maritime archaeology and submerged remains.	Confirmation of every traditional claim.

13. Ancient Ability and the Evolution Question

Evolutionary anthropology does not teach that historic Egyptians or Romans possessed animal-level intelligence. Conventional researchers recognize planning, art, communication and complex tools among early Homo sapiens. A Christian argument should address the position informed scholars actually hold rather than a sarcastic version of it.

Archaeology can still challenge a timeline or developmental sequence. A securely dated city earlier than accepted urban civilization could require scholars to revise when a capability appeared. It could challenge the popular image of history as a smooth staircase from barely capable people to intelligent modern people. It would not, by itself, force every researcher to abandon evolutionary theory. Models commonly adjust to include new evidence.

The Biblical contrast is more fundamental. Genesis begins with capable humanity, then records cultural development, corruption, catastrophic loss, dispersion and rebuilding. It expects intelligence early and permits knowledge or infrastructure to disappear. This is not the same historical picture as uninterrupted progress.

BALANCED CONCLUSION

An early city could challenge an accepted timetable. Its mere existence would not disprove every form of evolution. Genesis already provides a positive reason to expect capable humanity near the beginning.

14. What Ancient Achievements Actually Show

The Great Pyramid

The Great Pyramid demonstrates extraordinary planning, quarrying, transport, measurement and labor coordination. Modern engineers could build another pyramid if given sufficient resources and purpose. The important observation is that ancient builders achieved monumental results with the tools and systems available to them, while some details of their methods remain debated.

Roman concrete

Recent research has examined hot mixing and lime clasts in Roman concrete. Material once dismissed as careless mixing may help certain concrete heal cracks when water enters. This does not prove that every Roman structure outperforms every modern one. It shows that old workmanship may contain intentional knowledge modern investigators are still recovering.

Gobekli Tepe

Gobekli Tepe displays monumental construction, specialized craftsmanship and social organization within a period conventionally described as Pre-Pottery Neolithic. The site required scholars to recognize significant capability earlier than simpler pictures had suggested. The revision concerned what people could accomplish within the model, not an abandonment of the entire model.

These examples correct chronological pride. Newer tools are not identical with greater intelligence. Ancient people did not need our machines in order to think, plan, teach or create.

15. Progress Is Not a Straight Staircase

Technology is cumulative. A modern telephone depends upon mines, global transport, factories, electrical grids, software, satellites and thousands of specialists. Most users could not reproduce it if those systems vanished. The device displays the achievement of a civilization, not the complete personal knowledge of the person holding it.

History can include invention, loss and rediscovery. War, disease, migration, language division and catastrophe can remove specialists and records. Survivors may return to simpler construction because essential systems are gone. Their buildings become simpler before their minds do.

Genesis 11:6

Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

Babel shows organized capability returning after the Flood as population, shared language and materials became available. God's response recognizes the powerful combination of imagination and cooperation. The builders did not need to evolve into human intelligence. They needed the social conditions through which human intelligence could again operate at scale.

16. Is the Discovery of Underwater Cities an End-Times Sign?

Scripture does not identify Atlantis, Bimini, sonar discoveries or underwater archaeology as prophetic signs. It gives no prediction that a pre-Flood city must be found shortly before Christ returns. The discovery of such a city would be historically significant, but announcing it as fulfilled prophecy would add a connection the Biblical text does not make.

The end-times relationship is more substantial. Second Peter says people in the last days will dismiss future judgment while treating ordinary continuity as the complete story of the past. Peter answers their view of the future by restoring creation and the Flood to their view of history.

PROPHETIC BOUNDARY

The discoveries are not identified as signs. The Flood itself is a God-given warning that the present world will not continue forever.

17. “The World That Then Was”

2 Peter 3:3-7

There shall come in the last days scoffers... saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation... the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now... are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

The scoffers interpret continuity as permanence. Because life appears ordinary and Christ has not yet returned, they assume His return will never interrupt it. Peter says their conclusion depends upon a deliberately restricted history. Creation happened by the Word of God. The former world perished by water. The present world is preserved by the same Word for future judgment.

A lost city gives that warning a human scale. Its citizens ate, worked, married, planned and built. They expected another ordinary day. Their routines did not make them secure. A wall beneath the sea is therefore more than evidence that water levels changed. It is an image of human confidence that could not preserve itself.

Peter does not use the past to satisfy curiosity. He uses it to ask what kind of people we should be now.

2 Peter 3:11

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

18. Why This Study Matters

It corrects our view of humanity

Human beings did not acquire value by becoming technologically impressive. Every person bears the dignity and accountability associated with creation in God’s image. Ancient ability is therefore not an embarrassment to Scripture. It fits Scripture’s starting point.

It corrects our view of progress

More devices do not guarantee more wisdom. Civilization can accumulate knowledge while becoming morally corrupt. It can lose infrastructure while retaining intelligent people. The Bible gives us development, judgment, dispersion and rebuilding rather than confidence in automatic moral advancement.

It corrects our view of permanence

Cities feel permanent because one human life is short. Archaeology gives us a longer view. Coastlines move, kingdoms fall and buildings disappear. The Flood gives the ultimate Biblical example that human achievement cannot make rebellion safe.

It corrects our response to uncertainty

Christian confidence does not require certainty about Bimini, Yonaguni or Atlantis. We can leave an archaeological question open while standing firmly upon what Scripture states. Honest uncertainty is not unbelief. It is restraint about conclusions God has not required us to make.

19. Pastoral and Teaching Guardrails

Do not call a sonar pattern a city before direct investigation establishes human construction.

Do not date a structure with a loose object merely recovered from the same body of water.

Do not treat every right angle as proof of workmanship or every natural explanation as proof that no people were involved.

Do not say every submerged settlement resulted from Noah's Flood. Later subsidence, earthquakes, tsunamis and sea-level changes are real.

Do not describe Atlantis as Cain's city without Biblical or archaeological identification.

Do not claim that modern engineers cannot build pyramids. Honor the ancient achievement without weakening it through exaggeration.

Do not misrepresent evolutionary scholarship as teaching that historic people were barely intelligent animals.

Do not make discovery of a pre-Flood city necessary for confidence in Genesis.

Do connect past judgment with present accountability, repentance and the return of Christ.

Confidence	Claims appropriate to that level
Certain from Scripture	Cain built a city before the Flood. Early culture included specialization. God judged the former world by water.
Certain from archaeology	Human settlements and inhabited landscapes exist beneath present water.
Strong	Atlit-Yam and Pavlopetri are genuine settlements. Doggerland was inhabited land. Bimini has a strong natural explanation.
Reasonable possibility	Some natural formations may have been used or modified by people. Some traditions may preserve transformed memories of catastrophe.
Open question	Whether a known ruin belongs to the pre-Flood world. Whether the Cuban sonar forms are artificial. Whether Khambhat preserves an ancient settlement.
Not established	Atlantis was Cain's city. Bimini is a road to Atlantis. Yonaguni is a constructed pyramid. Underwater discoveries are a prophesied end-times sign.

20. The Greater Refuge

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The delay of judgment is not proof that God has forgotten. It is mercy. Noah did not survive because he understood every geological mechanism involved in the Flood. He believed God and entered the refuge God provided.

Our refuge is not a modern city, an archaeological theory or a vessel built by human imagination. Our refuge is Jesus Christ. Every person has sinned. Intelligence cannot remove guilt, engineering cannot

reconcile us to God and historical knowledge cannot earn forgiveness. Jesus lived without sin, died for our sins, was buried and rose again. Salvation is received by grace through faith in Him.

Hebrews 13:14

For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

The Bible begins fallen urban history with Cain building after leaving the presence of the Lord. It records Babel building to make humanity a name. It ends with the city God provides for His redeemed people. Human cities may be submerged, conquered, abandoned or burned. The city God promises will endure.

A Personal Response

This study should leave more than an opinion about an underwater photograph. It should leave four questions before the reader:

- Have I mistaken the routine of ordinary life for security?
- Have I treated technological progress as evidence that humanity no longer needs God?
- Am I using God-given ability in worship and service or in pride and rebellion?
- Have I entered the refuge God has provided in Jesus Christ?

If you recognize that you have sinned and cannot save yourself, turn to Jesus Christ. A prayer does not save by the repetition of its words. Christ saves the person who genuinely repents and trusts Him. You may speak honestly to Him:

PRAYER OF FAITH

Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and cannot save myself. I believe You died for my sins, were buried and rose again. I turn from trusting myself and place my faith in You. Please forgive me, save me and make me Your own. In Jesus' name, Amen.

If you have trusted Christ or if this study has raised questions, please speak with Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley. Reason Together Church exists so those questions can be opened with the Bible, examined patiently and discussed without fear.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for creating humanity in Your image and for every ability You have entrusted to us. Forgive us for turning intelligence, technology and achievement into reasons for pride. Give us humility when evidence corrects our assumptions, honesty when a claim remains uncertain and courage to stand where Your Word has spoken. Do not allow us to mistake Your patience for Your absence. Teach us to live in holy conversation and godliness as we look for the coming of Jesus Christ. Bring repentance, faith and salvation to every reader who has not entered the refuge You provide. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Commentary Conclusion

Pre-Flood cities may remain beneath water, sediment or later geological formation. Genesis allows the possibility and confirmed submerged settlements demonstrate that human places can survive underwater. Yet no presently known site supplies the secure construction context, chronology and Biblical identification required to call it a pre-Flood city.

The lack of identification does not weaken the Biblical message. Scripture already tells us that humanity began capable, developed culture, became corrupt and experienced catastrophic judgment. Archaeology

may illuminate that picture and challenge assumptions about early ability. It cannot replace the revelation that gives the evidence its spiritual meaning.

The discovery of underwater cities is not itself a prophesied sign of the end. The former world is the warning. God has acted in history, His patience is giving time for repentance and the present world will not continue forever. The proper conclusion is not merely that ancient people could build. It is that no civilization can build itself beyond accountability to God.

FINAL COMMENTARY PRINCIPLE

Capable humanity built. The former world perished. The present world will not continue forever. Our hope must rest in Jesus Christ and the city God provides.

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Bring your questions. Open your Bible. Let's Reason Together the Word of God.