

changed their testimony. They did not change it. They held to their witness through stoning, boiling in oil, and the agony of crucifixion. Their followers did the same.

This kind of witness is evidence of the highest order in any court. It convinced me of the truth of the New Testament. I read C. S. Lewis's *Mere Christianity* and John Stott's *Basic Christianity*. I began to read the Bible with new eyes. I prayed and asked Jesus Christ to come into my life. He came! I was baptized and received into the Christian church by my good friend and pastor, Jeff Cotter. My whole life was transformed. I was now full of the love and joy of knowing Jesus Christ.

But what of the Old Testament? I had never read it. It didn't seem relevant. I had become a Christian without reading it and had not felt the need to be convinced of its truth. But history has always fascinated me.

A friend suggested I read Werner Keller's *The Bible as History*. What a stimulating book! How fascinating to roam the ancient world with Abraham, Moses, David, and Solomon; to search for the lost cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. And the flood! To find that archeologists had discovered that a devastating flood of gigantic proportions occurred six thousand years ago was truly exciting.

I have personally experienced two major floods on my ranch on the Santa Ynez River in California. I have had to flee with my child in my arms in the early hours of the morning while muddy water poured into our home. I have rescued baby calves from the rising waters. I could feel the power of Noah's flood as it destroyed the known world in that ancient time.

Is the period of Noah's flood as far back as we can go in verifiable biblical history? I am a geologist by training and have taught historical geology in the laboratory at Stanford University. If evidence existed to

confirm the biblical account of creation, I could find it. I could evaluate it. I was trained to use the scientific method of gathering evidence and evaluating the results.

But it is one thing to apply scientific methodology to records of the past. It is quite another to gather information dealing with creation. Creation -- the very word had an unfamiliar ring. Before I became a Christian, my world view was that our existence was due to random forces operating within a closed system.

A closed system or a closed Universe excludes the possibility of supernatural forces or divine action. The basic premise of science is that all events must have a naturalistic cause. I had felt that nothing could exist outside of or beyond the total cosmic machine. There was no place in this eternal merry-go-round of atoms, molecules, stars, and planets for God. How then could I hope to find theories in support of historical biblical creation from a discipline that seemed to deny the possibility of a Creator? I began to have genuine fears that my new Christian faith would be seriously challenged by research into the latest scientific theories of our origins.

I went to my minister, Jeff Cotter, for help. Jeff researched some key words from the Genesis account in the original Hebrew. We studied Scripture. We prayed for guidance.