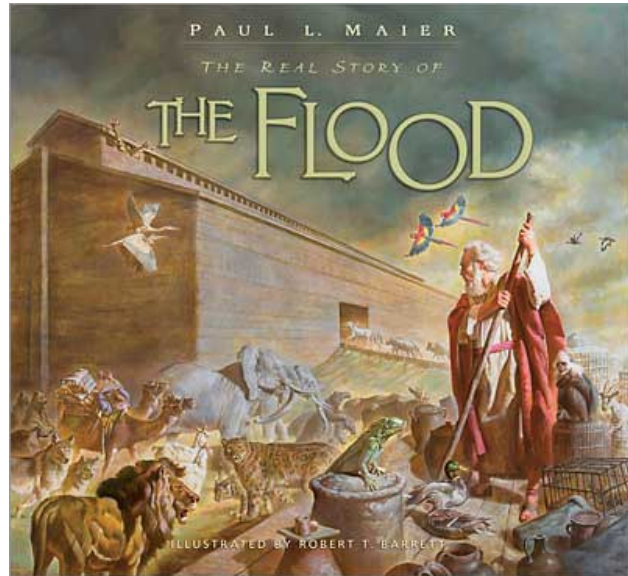


Author: Paul L. Maier
Illustrator: Robert T. Barrett
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I wanted to extend a word of thanks to the kind folks at Concordia Publishing House for sending me a prerelease review copy of Paul L. Maier's *The Real Story of the Flood*.

Paul L. Maier is the Russell H. Seibert Professor of Ancient History at Western Michigan University. His areas of research include manuscript and text analysis, archaeology, and the comparison of secular and sacred sources from the first century A.D. Dr. Maier also serves as the second vice-president of the Lutheran Church –Missouri Synod. Two of his more well known, recent publications are *More Than a Skeleton* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003) and (with H. Hanegraaff), *The Davinci Code-Fact or Fiction?* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2004). In addition to these works, Dr. Maier has written over 250 scholarly articles and has nine other books to his credit.

Robert T. Barrett is an accomplished painter, muralist, illustrator, and also a professor. He has illustrated another work by Dr. Maier titled: *The Real Story of the Creation* (St. Louis, Mo: Concordia Publishing House, 2007).

This forthcoming work by Dr. Paul L. Maier is a great way to introduce your family to the real story Noah's ark and the flood. While many other children's books about Noah's Ark and the flood sacrifice important facts for the sake of being cute and cuddly, this book takes a different & refreshing approach. The main difference is that Dr. Maier strives to tell the story in a way that is as biblically and historically accurate as possible. The conviction to be as biblically and historically accurate as possible is something I've appreciated in Dr. Maier's adult works and I'm glad to see he has maintained this conviction in his works for children.

This story is told from the vantage point of the third person, perhaps by an unnamed narrator. Each chapter begins with a key Bible reference from the New International Version, that sets the stage for the writing in that chapter and the artwork that accompanies it. The text very intentionally engages the reader and listener with key ideas and questions that encourage one to thoroughly consider the part of the story at hand. The key ideas conveyed in this story are:

- Sinfulness of man

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- Faithfulness of Noah & his family
- God's redemption of Noah and his family
- The enormity of building such a large vessel
- Explanation of God's covenant with Noah and the significance of the rainbow

In addition to the key ideas mentioned above, there are a few additional topics touched upon briefly that are worth mentioning:

- Explanation concerning dinosaurs, Gap Theory - (Epilogue)
- Historicity of the biblical flood narrative and its parallels found in the flood narratives of other ancient cultures. (Epilogue)
- Explanation of Shem, Ham, & Japheth's relation to modern people groups as expressed in the table of nations found in Genesis 10. (Chapter 12)

These brief references may serve as a good introduction or launching point for those wishing to engage their family in a discussion on these ideas.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone wishing to introduce their family to a much more accurate representation of the story of Noah's ark and the flood. Dr. Maier's writing accompanied by Robert T. Barrett's illustrations make this book a joy to read and a beauty to behold. Adults and children alike will be engaged and educated by this work. If you appreciate this work, I would also commend several other illustrated children's books by Dr. Maier:

- *The Very First Christmas* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1998)
- *The Very First Easter* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1999)
- *The Very First Christians* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2001)
- *Martin Luther: A Man Who Changed the World* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2004)
- *The Real Story of Creation* (St. Louis, Mo: Concordia Publishing House, 2007)