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Sermon on the Mount - The Foolish and the Floods

Main Verses:

- Matthew 7:24
- Deuteronomy 32:1
- Proverbs 1:20
- Isaiah 8:7
- Matthew 24:37
- 1 Corinthians 3:11

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all right Shabbat Shalom everybody well we've we've made it to the end of the Sermon on the Mount so that was a humbling year year and a half something like that hopefully it's been a fun journey hopefully it's been a humbling journey so we've journeyed together through Yeshua's most famous teaching the Sermon on the Mount according to Matthew we've heard about the salt and the light. We've heard about loving our enemies. It's our favorite. We've learned about how to pray and we've even learned about worrying, judging others, and how to petition from the Father. And now Yeshua brings it all to a stunning conclusion at the end of chapter 7 of Matthew with a story that reveals the ultimate choice every human being must make. And surprise, it's really nothing new. as far as what the Sermon on the Mount has been teaching us. There's two choices, there's two paths, there's two gates, there's two houses, there's two decisions. And what makes these decisions so hard is they're not always clearly defined. In other words, we have a path that leads to life and a path that leads to destruction. And we know the one that leads to destruction is wide and the path is narrow. But sometimes when we go out in the world, it's hard to tell the difference. And that's why we're gonna, we'll see Yeshua understands that because Yeshua is speaking in wisdom

parables. He understands that there's not a blueprint for how to walk through life that's gonna be exactly the same for everybody. He understands that relationships are different and people are different and different things happen and you respond differently based on that. But he wants to put it, just drive it home that love should be the foundation of all of it. Humility should be the foundation of all of it. Reaching to control other people a sign that it's tainted and you're walking down the wrong one. And so he tells us a story. He says in this story there are two builders, two foundations, and then there's a devastating storm and flood that comes. And when Yeshua is speaking in this story, he's reaching deep in Israel's past to paint a picture that would have made his first century audience kind of sit up and take notice. Because he's talking about kingdoms. He's talking about the same thing he's been talking about, empires. And he's asking the ultimate question, what are you really building your life upon? What foundation are you really constructing the infrastructure of your life and how you do things and how you live? And so here's the parable in Matthew chapter 7. We come to it. Matthew chapter 7 starting in verse 24 he says, "Therefore anyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came, the streams rose, and the wind blew and beat against the house, yet it didn't fall because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand." At the very end of the sermon, he's done. Everyone's amazed at his teaching. In the Greek, the word there means to be struck out of the normal way of thinking. In other words, Yeshua had shattered the assumptions and the mold that people had around their mindset of who God is, how God is, and who I am to God. And Yeshua shatters it with the Sermon on the Mount. How could He not? How could He not? But notice why they were astonished: because He taught as one who had authority, not like their teachers of the law. See, in Yeshua's day in the first century, religious teachers who we would generically call rabbis, they had a very specific way of teaching. You would not just give your own opinion with its own authority. You would try to get citations from rabbis who taught you this opinion that you agree with from Nazareth. Comes up and he doesn't say, well, rabbi so-and-so said so-and-so, rabbi so-and-so said so-and-so. And I love it because we always assume carpenter, and the more we're researching, the more Christian academia digs down deep. Handyman is likely a better word for Yeshua. If anything, he likely built with stones because of the construction of the area, and of course, Zephyrus, the big city down the street that he was probably working in. Probably much more stone, but you wouldn't have exclusive trades. I mean, come on, they didn't really have unions, right? You would have a broad spectrum of skill sets. Yeshua was a handyman. Yeshua was a handyman. He liked to fix stuff. And here comes a handyman, and what does he say? You've heard it said by that rabbi and that rabbi and that rabbi and that rabbi. But I, holding a wrench, I don't know. But I say, but I say, just so bold, audacious even, with his own authority. And the authority that he spoke with shattered everything. It was unprecedented. It was shocking. When Yeshua makes a his own words, the pivot point of human destiny, if you will. When he says that you respond to what he teaches, like how you're going to respond to what he says is going to determine whether you stand or fall, whether you're foolish or wise, whether you have life or death. He's putting himself in the same category as Moses. That's who he's embodying right now. As he stood before, like when Moses stood before all of Israel in Deuteronomy 32. Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. Let the teaching drop down like rain, and let the speech distill like dew. Here, Moses is warning Israel that rejecting his words would bring about disaster. The enemy armies would sweep down, and they'd just, like a flood, and wipe them out. Moses was saying,

listen to me. or face catastrophe. And now Yeshua is making the same claim. He's responding to his words and he's saying how you respond is going to determine life or death. Matthew is so intentional about how he constructs his presentation of the Sermon on the Mount, right? He writes that Yeshua went up the mountain. That's my soapbox. I love that detail. Not a mountain, the mountain. Well, what mountain was the mountain? He never says. It's on purpose. Because if you're looking at the story of the Bible and I say the mountain of the Bible, you would say Mount Sinai. Yeshua goes up the mountain and then he begins to give the revelation of God to the people. And Moses goes up the mountain and he comes down the mountain. And Yeshua goes up the mount and he receives the revelation of the Lord and he teaches it and he comes down the mountain. When Moses comes down the mountain, he brings with him 10 commandments. But when Yeshua comes down the mountain for the next two chapters, In patterns of three, if you will, there's a record of miracles that take place immediately after he comes down from the mountain. And it's so funny because it's ten. Moses brings down ten commandments from the mountain, Yeshua brings down ten miracles from the mountain. Instantly. Bam, bam, bam, bam. Right off the bat. The kingdom is now working. It's no longer on the mountain. It's in the valleys. It's in the waters. It's all over the place. It's escaped the mountain, if you will. And this is what Yeshua is showing us. This is what it looks like when the kingdom begins to expand. It's just neat. It's neat and it's inspiring and it's motivating. It's encouraging. Yeshua is also set up here and embodying another character in the Bible that brings forth the revelation of God. And this character is actually a lady. It's Lady Wisdom. You've heard of Lady Wisdom? It's a character in the Bible. Yeah, it's a character in the Bible. need to understand who this is. So in the Old Testament or the Hebrew scriptures, there's this fascinating character known as Lady Wisdom and she makes herself known specifically in the book of Proverbs. It's metaphorical, it's not a real person. But this would have been something that was known. Now we know that wisdom in Hebrew is chokmah, it's a feminine word. But in the book of Proverbs, wisdom gets personified by the author into a woman. And The way that she's described is you kind of get this picture. You picture her as this cosmic figure who was present with God at creation. When the world was creation, wisdom was with God. Wisdom understands how life is supposed to work. And wisdom is the one that calls out human beings, offering to teach them the way of life, the way of God. I think I put some notes up there, didn't I? Yeah, so key verses you can find her in, but it's a theme. It's a theme throughout Proverbs. Proverbs 1 speaks about her. No, not that one. Trying to grab people's attention with the wisdom of the Lord. Also have in Psalm 124, or Proverbs 124, here's what she says to people who ignore her teachings. it says i have called you and you refused i stretched out my hand and no one paid attention you neglected all of my counsel and did not want my reproof so when your calamity comes i will laugh when your dread arrives i will mock when your dread comes like a storm when your calamity comes like a whirlwind when distress and anguish come upon you did you catch that lady wisdom the personification of God's wisdom in Proverbs. Lady Wisdom warns that those who reject her instructions, "Your dread comes like a storm, your calamity comes like a whirlwind." That's kind of neat. That's the same message of the Torah. It's the same message that God is telling us through different authors, throughout different time periods of the Bible, and through different types of literature. When Yeshua tells his parable about the wise and the foolish builders and warns about the storm that will test every single foundation, he's deliberately echoing that same warning, Lady Wisdom's warning, or the wisdom of God's warning going forward. He's claiming to speak with the voice of the divine himself. And I think that's awesome because we already know he's speaking with the authority of God, right?

Absolutely. I am the voice of wisdom that created the universe. I understand how reality actually works. Listen to me and build wisely, or ignore me and face the storm. When Yeshua speaks of building a house on a rock, he's also drawing from the images of the story of the Bible, the story of Israel. His Jewish audience would have immediately understood what rock he's referring to. If I say the rock, what's at the rock of the Bible? We would say the rock might be God, yes, but also what other rock? We think of the temple. We think of the temple mount, of course, literally called the house of the Lord, which was built on Mount Zion, which is a Big rock. It's a rocky hilltop. And it goes deeper. Like throughout the entire Old Testament, whenever God's people face threats from enemy armies, the same image appears again and again. God's house is on a rocky mountain, standing secure while chaos whirls around it. Remember how Yeshua opened the Sermon on the Mount? He called his disciples a city on a hill that cannot be hidden. Now he closes by talking about a building like building a house on a rock. and I don't think they're separate images. Yeshua is calling his followers to become the new Jerusalem, if you will. This new temple, this new community that represents God's kingdom on earth. But unlike the physical temple that could and would be destroyed, this house would be built on an unshakable foundation of his teachings. In the Old Testament, floods don't just represent natural disasters. They do. Floods are horrible. They're often used as images for invading armies that swoop across the land, specifically in the prophets, especially when God's people abandoned his ways. Picture when an ancient army attacked a city. Thousands of soldiers would surround it like floodwaters. The defenders would feel overwhelmed and eventually submerge and drowned by the tide of the enemy forces breaking through. We have this mentioned frequently. in the prophets here about assyria 700 years before yeshua spoke these words in the summer of the mount the prophet isaiah warned jerusalem about the assyrian army using this exact same type of flood imagery it says therefore this is what the lord god says look i am laying in zion a stone a tested stone a precious stone for a sure foundation no one who trusts will overtake it or be dismayed There we go. Isaiah 8, the flood of Assyria. We know what happened when Assyria came. They flooded the northern kingdom and then they threatened to go down south. A century later, How about of Egypt? Who is this rising like the Nile, like rivers, whose waters surge? Egypt rises like the Nile, but that day belongs to the Lord, the Lord Almighty, a day of vengeance. Whenever empires rise, the Bible calls them floods because of the damage that they do. And Yeshua is saying, if you build your house, if you build your life, if you build your wisdom, the scope of your wisdom and the trajectory of your wisdom, because that's important too. What's your intention that you're going to build wisdom around? If you build it on the sands of the world and of self-preservation and of greed and of conflict and of control, if you're going to build your infrastructure of your house on those sands, which is what we're told to build them on according to the world, then when empires rise, when pressure comes against you, the foundation, it doesn't matter about the house you built, it doesn't matter about the house, the foundation will be ripped out from under you. and you will have nothing left. With that in mind, that imagery, now you can overlay that across the whole Sermon on the Mount of what Yeshua is trying to set up. This is what a foundation looks like. This is what a foundation looks like that empires cannot take away. No one can control you if this is your foundation across the Sermon on the Mount. No one has taken... You don't give your power to anybody if you lay this foundation. Yeshua speaks of another flood that is coming, the Roman flood. And he's speaking to his generation and he's warning of this other flood. And later in Matthew's gospel, he makes it very clear about what he means. Matthew 24, the Olivet Discourse, and in Luke 21, Luke's version of it. And he speaks about the coming destruction of

Jerusalem that's about to take place in the next generation. And what's going to happen is the inhabitants of Judah, the Jewish people under Roman occupation and Roman rule, they can't take it anymore. They're tired of being... oppressed they're tired of being robbed they're tired of the greed of Rome always consuming them and they say you know what we got to fight back and so they did they did it was the first Jewish war zealots rose up a militia Jewish militia rose up with weapons and they attacked Rome and they attacked the Romans trying to push them out of Judea lots of battles took place everybody died when that happened And then, to prove a point, Rome came and they tore down the entire city of Jerusalem. They pushed over the temple. They destroyed everything. They destroyed everything. The foundation was washed away. "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. But on the day Noah entered the ark, they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them away. The flood Yeshua warned about was Rome and it came in 70 AD. And exactly as predicted, the Roman legions destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the Jewish people out of that area. Everyone listening to Yeshua at that time lived under the Roman occupation. Roman roads connected every single city. Roman soldiers enforced Roman law. Roman taxes funded Roman projects. The whole system seemed very unshakable, very permanent, eternal. Caesar Augustus had declared himself the son of God and claimed to have brought peace to the whole world through Roman might. It's the famous Roman peace, Pax Romana. Yet Yeshua stands before his audience and he essentially says, "All of this, all of this, Rome, its power, Its promises, its peace is built on sand. It'll rise up quick and it'll fall. And when the storm starts, when God unleashes the floodgates of the game of power that everyone loves to play, even it will be washed away. Yeshua understood something his contemporaries missed. Every empire in history makes the same promises and every empire eventually falls. Assyria seemed unstoppable. That's why Jonah was so thrown off by them. it's a military machine conquering nation after nation violently yet the prophet isaiah called it merely a tool in god's hand assyria fell and its capital nineveh was so thoroughly destroyed that for centuries people couldn't even find it it disappeared babylon appeared eternal with its golden scepter yet the prophet daniel saw its end very clearly in chapter two guess who took it out big old statue a little rock a rock that grew Daniel 2 the pattern continues today the sand that we are offered for a foundation in our modern world world It's the same thing that's been offered in the past. It's the same thing We struggle with as mankind we we try to pursue We try to pursue so much security to make ourselves feel safe instead of giving it to God because it's scary But we have economic systems that promise security through wealth accumulation gotta keep going gotta hustle gotta go go go go and Political movements claiming that they can solve all of humanity's deepest problems. You know, got some going on today. We just all the time. And that's not even a one-sided political joke. That's like everybody's so optimistic about their stance every couple years. Yes, this will fix it. Okay. Technology promising to overcome every human limitation. All of these, when we walk out the door and our first priority is to control, other people so that we can gain. Whether that means security, whether that means money, safety. If that's how we're starting to build our house then we're always going to be in a place where we're looking for someone else to take out so that we can succeed. And that's on microaggression level and all the way up. When we make these our ultimate foundations they're washed away when the slightest flood comes. In Yeshua's generation they had an impossible choice to make. between two destructive paths i only thought these were the two options one was to compromise with rome they could culturally assimilate into greco-roman

values which they had already heavily done they could adopt roman cultures and they could try to maintain their jewish identity as a private religious preference but no one wants to do that it's a compromise against the word of god option two violently revolt against rome take up arms join the zealot movements and drive out occupying forces with military resistance Both paths led to destruction, as history would prove. And Yeshua, what makes his sermon so incredibly radical is it's a third option that no one had ever thought about. And it was the way of the kingdom. And it was saying, I'm not going to participate in that anymore. I'm not going to participate in trying to scoop the sand up and keep compacting it just so day after day, just so I can feel some power in my life. I'm going to submit to the power of God. And any storm that comes, then I don't have to worry about it. i know that i'm on the rock i know that whatever happens god has i don't have to make one of these other choices his followers would neither fully compromise with rome nor violently revolt instead they would live as citizens of god's kingdom while residing in an earthly empire one always remaining on top of the other this kingdom looks different than the empires of the world the way of the world This empire acts different because it teaches to this kingdom acts different. This kingdom acts different because we choose to love our enemies, which starts with seeing them as human beings and not combatants. We choose to give generously because we understand that God gave us all the blessings in our lives so that we could be a vessel of blessing to others. So we give generously because when you die, Yeshua has a parable about that. We show the world what true faith looks like by trusting in God's provision instead of anxiously striving. Hustle, hustle, hustle. No, I got to do this. I got to do this. No, no, no, no. Instead of harsh judgment, this type of kingdom emits mercy and forgiveness to people, even if they don't deserve it by default. And this would be the type of kingdom that would flourish creating or curating creative nonviolent solutions to topple empires. The type of boldness it takes to stand before the Roman government and refuse to passively surrender while non-violently resist is something I can never imagine the level of courage it takes. And with all of this, we know the end of the story. We know the kingdom. We know the sermon. We know the faith. But when we continue reading, one fact just gets solidified in our minds, and that is who the Rock is. because yeshua doesn't just teach about the rock he becomes the rock of our faith when the ultimate flood comes for him the cross death grave he didn't just survive it he conquered it and that's why paul is so adamant he says for no one can lay any foundation any foundation other than the one already laid which is jesus christ yeshua isn't offering survival tips for life storms or advice on personal happiness he's announcing the arrival of god's kingdom and he's inviting you one last time inviting you to become its citizens The house on the rock isn't just a metaphor for individual stability. It's an image of the kingdom community that will outlast every earthly empire from now until the end. And the question that Yeshua leaves us with is not just personal. I mean, it's what kingdom are you building? What allegiance are you pledging? When the floods come, and they will, will you be found standing? We can build our house on sand. on promises of security through power, wealth, control, accumulation of advantages and benefits, or we can build it on God's kingdom, offering true life through surrender, service, sacrificial love, and trust in God's provision. And I don't know if you've looked outside, but the floods are already rising. And so we need to decide which foundation are we choosing to manifest this kingdom on. Please join me as we end with worship. And during this time, if you need prayer for any reason, we have a prayer team on either side of the stage. Or you can come down to the altar if you need to lay something here. So please stand, and we'll conclude with prayer and worship. Alvino Malcano, our Father and our King, Father, we thank you for this opportunity that we get to come together to read over your Holy Word. Father, that it would ignite something in us, the spirit within us, that we would always be building on the right foundation. Father, I ask that the authority and the power within that spirit would be allowed to work through us in every way, whether it's forgiveness, love, wisdom. We thank you, Father. In the name of Yeshua, we pray. Amen. Sing the Shema with me. Shema Yisrael Ha'abam V'achavah Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. Blessed is the name of his glorious kingdom for all eternity. And may the Lord also cause you to increase and overflow in love for one another and for all people in order to strengthen your hearts as blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Yeshua with all of his Kedoshim. And may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord lift up his countenance toward you and give you his peace. In the name of our Tsar, Shalom, our Prince of Peace, Yeshua HaMashiach. Amen. Shabbat Shalom, family.

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