

Genesis Unleashed

Dick Fischer

Enough archaeological artifacts and pieces of literature have been recovered from the ancient Near East in recent years touching on Genesis characters and events to highlight the need for making necessary English translation adjustments to the sacred text. Rooted in the 1611 King James Version, Genesis has blossomed into puzzling modern versions to keep us perplexed even today. Just a cursory reading of the Genesis 2-11 narrative places early patriarchal history within the context of the Neolithic Period in southern Mesopotamia, present-day Iraq, beginning no earlier than 7,000 years ago, whereas our species has occupied earthly domains for hundreds of thousands of years. Old Testament commentators have shown some awareness of ancient Near East literature in recent years, but typically do not dig deep enough to recognize its value. If these much-maligned chapters of Genesis are translated and understood as Adamic/Semitic history, not as human history, they make perfectly good sense. Only the King James Version is examined here, but the principles apply to all translations.

Keywords: Genesis, Adam, Adam and Eve, Seth, Cain, Enoch, Noah, Flood, Sumerians, Akkadians, Eridu, Mesopotamia, Near East, Tigris, Euphrates, Ziusudra, Gilgamesh, Sumerian King List, Adapa.

Where Did We Go Wrong?

Interpretational mistakes with major long-term consequences began with the early Christian Church. When the Apostle Paul set out on missionary trips he visited synagogues seeking out Jews who would listen to the good news the Messiah had come. Considering Jesus to be God in human form was considered blasphemous to many of his Jewish listeners, yet Paul found a few who took his message to heart. Not committed to a one-God concept, Greeks and Romans proved more receptive, and they became an integral part of early congregations.

Followers of "The Way," as the early church was called, consisted of Romans, Greeks and converted Jews who would pray, take communion, and

read the Scriptures aloud at weekly meetings. Although these congregations may have possessed a letter or two, the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament was an object of reading and study, and the first book, Genesis, was a likely starting place. Listening to the stories of Adam and Noah read aloud, Gentiles in the group of believers had no reason to think Jewish history was not their history too. Thus, the mistake took root that persists to this day - Jewish anthropological history erroneously misunderstood as human history.

Evidence

From an article in *Forbes*, "The most important rule in any scientific debate is this: it doesn't matter who wins the debate. It doesn't matter who makes the better argument; it doesn't matter who convinces more people; it doesn't matter who votes with you. What matters is that you identify the key points of evidence that could definitively settle the contentious issues, and then you do your best to go out and find that evidence. Once you do, you follow it wherever it leads."¹

Strictly speaking history is not science, although scientific principles can be applied where they are appropriate to matters in dispute. Science can be described as a method or system by which we make observations, gather data, formulate theories, arrive at conclusions, etc. A method can be labeled "scientific" if it adheres to certain commonly accepted rules that have long been established to insure accuracy and impartiality. With that in mind we can view the Genesis narrative in the light of evidence found in inscriptions recovered from the ancient Near East and we should be able to translate Hebrew into English equivalents that realistically fit its historical setting.

Is Genesis History?

Considering the Genesis 2-11 narrative, essentially we have three options; (1) it is true human history (creationists), (2) it is bogus human history with lessons attached (liberals), or (3) it is valid Adamic/Semitic history beginning about 7,000 years ago in southern Mesopotamia. The first two options have something in common, there is no evidence to support either one, whereas option three does have supporting evidence to show the beginning chapters of the Bible, Genesis 2-11, are consistent with the history of the ancient Near East only uncovered within the last 160 years.

If popularity was the deciding factor in determining what we should believe then the first two options would be clear winners, however, in science corroborating evidence normally wins out in the long run. With that in mind

we should consider historical evidence that might tip the scale in favor of the third method of understanding, and perhaps, establish a paradigm where future generations will attach greater credibility to Scripture which in turn can only enhance our Christian message.

Although the first eleven chapters of Genesis are extolled as "among the most important in Scripture," Walter Brueggemann, author of *Genesis: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, eschews any historical value in them. He refers to Genesis as a "process of story-telling" and introduces the early chapters simply as "prehistory." "In these texts, there is almost no historical particularity," he explains. "Other than the reference to specific peoples in chapters 10-11, there is no concrete identification to historical persons, groups, movements or institutions."

Rather than existing as flesh and blood human beings, individual persons named in Genesis are "representations of all creation."² Genesis texts "appropriated" materials from the common traditions of the Near East.³ And rather than telling the history of their people, Israel is thinking a new thought, Brueggemann insists. It is not historical reality they are after but rather they are "concerned with theological reality."⁴

T. L. Thompson wrote: "Not only has archaeology not proven a single event of the patriarchal traditions to be historical it has not shown any of the traditions to be likely."⁵ W. M. L. de Witte asserted that the Old Testament was produced by authors intent on "creating myth" rather than recounting history.⁶ Theological text book, *Old Testament Survey* states: "Since the Pentateuch is regarded as originating many centuries later than the Mosaic period, it is sometimes thought to preserve little genuine historical information."⁷

These are opinions or suppositions that carry weight in the theological community due to a reliance on "tradition"⁸ and a corresponding disinterest in contrary evidence. These above-mentioned theologians could learn something from scientist, Carl Sagan, who said, "The absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence."⁹ Just because they don't know any extra-biblical evidence doesn't mean none exists. Maybe they didn't think anybody would take the time to look, or know where to look, or upon looking actually find corroborating evidence that Genesis does indeed have historical integrity. With these attitudes in mind that Genesis has no historical value perhaps we should actually look at history and see for ourselves.

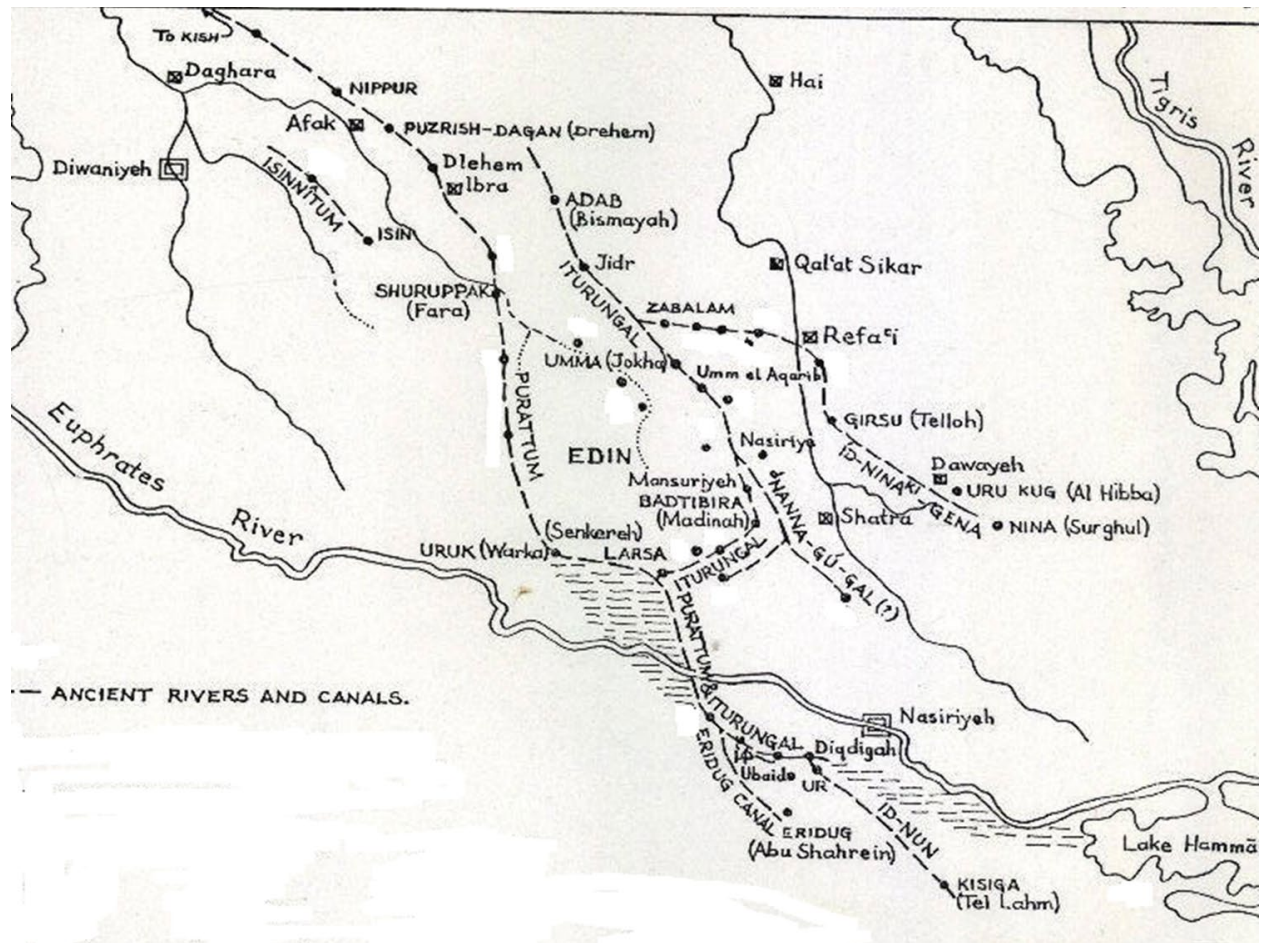
Is Genesis Valid Semitic History?

If we are to base a translation upon historical legitimacy it would behoove us to examine historical evidence both biblical and extra-biblical. A starting

point would be to realize that the first man in biblical history need not be the first human being on earth if we give credence to the sciences of anthropology and paleo-anthropology.¹⁰ Adam must have lived somewhat less than 10,000 years ago judging from the mention of farming,¹¹ tents, domesticated animals, stringed musical instruments, and implements of bronze and iron (Gen. 4:20-22).¹²

The location should be apparent from the inclusion of the Tigris (Hiddekel) and Euphrates among the four rivers surrounding the Garden. The Pishon and Gihon are more obscure but quite likely can be identified as the "Kuwait River"¹³ that once flowed out of Saudi Arabia and the Kashkan River that begins in the region of Cush, or Kush, in Eastern Mesopotamia. Today this region is called Khuzistan, a province in the southwest corner of Iran, formerly home to the *Kassi* of the cuneiform texts.¹⁴

The author of Genesis was astute enough to include in his description the lands of Havilah and Assyria. S. R. Driver places Havilah "most probably" in the northeast of Arabia on the west coast of the Persian Gulf: "The gold of Arabia was famed in antiquity."¹⁵ Assyria was named for Noah's grandson who planted the family flag in Nineveh (Gen. 10:11). Thus, southern Mesopotamia would be the obvious choice as the home for Adam and his family. When we consider the Neolithic setting we are afforded time and space brackets wherein we can place the first family in biblical history.



Egyptian Evidence

Egyptian creation myths are accounts of the creation of the world. Pyramid texts, tomb wall decorations and writings date to the Old Kingdom (2780-2250 BC). Ancient Egyptians had many creator gods and associated legends. The world, or more specifically Egypt, was created in diverse ways according to different parts of the country.

Dubbed "Memphite Theology" due to its connections with Memphis, it was here the god "Ptah," the "life-maker," sat upon his throne: "There took shape in the heart, there took shape on the tongue the form of Atum."¹⁶

Heart who lets all thinking rise
Tongue to say again all [Ptah's] heart's thought
that's how every god was grown
Atum and his company of nine ...¹⁷

Known as the chief god of the capital city of Memphis, Ptah was a creator god who brought all things into being by thinking of them with his mind and saying their names with his tongue. According to the priests of Memphis, everything was the work of Ptah's heart and tongue, gods were born, towns were founded, and order was maintained.¹⁸ Ptah, the high god of Memphis, was declared "master of destiny" and "creator of the world."¹⁹ In the Memphite system Atum was the agent of Ptah's will who understood his commands and carried them out.²⁰

In the mindset of ancient Egypt it is only a short step from being created to being a creator. Hymns to Atum honored him as such and one who accompanied the people, their pharaoh, and their land from birth to death to rebirth. Atum would sail his boat across the sky and priests would sing hymns. Even a hearkening to Genesis 1 can be seen in the following hymn to Atum:

There were no heavens and no earth,
There was no dry land and there were no reptiles in the land ...²¹

The pyramids of kings Merne-Re and Neferka-Re were inscribed with a dedication dating to before 2100 BC, many centuries before Moses. The text speaks of a first creation and a deified "Atum" who was on a primeval hill arising "out of the waters of chaos." Among those "whom Atum begot," according to the inscription, was one named "Seth."²²

What is the possibility that the subject of these pyramids is someone other than Adam? How many "created" individuals do we know of named Adam or Atum with a son named Seth? Unless we believe in serendipity it should be the same person.

Mesopotamian Evidence

Mesopotamian scribes were trained to produce multiple tablets of the edicts of the king. They also produced stories based upon a popular figure or event. Kings and gods were usual subjects and whatever gods were included would play a part according to what was in their area of responsivity. Three of the top four gods in southern Mesopotamia were Semitic/Akkadian, in origin, but were adopted by Sumerians too. Lesser gods normally had two names, one Akkadian, one Sumerian, and would appear in stories with the name appropriate for the language used. Utu, for example, was the Sumerian sun god and was the local city god in Sippar. Shamash was his name in a story transcribed in Akkadian. Ea was the god of wisdom and the creator of mankind, and appeared prominently in many Mesopotamian

stories written in Akkadian while Sumerian episodes used his Sumerian name, Enki (lord of the earth).

Literature recovered from Mesopotamia written in cuneiform style on clay tablets in Semitic and Sumerian languages has a rather notorious reputation respecting its reliability. Experts in the field who seek to translate and try to make sense of it differ on its trustworthiness. Demythologizing Mesopotamian epic tales and legends is an art that has no universally accepted rules making it difficult to make conclusions that would be agreed upon by all credentialed scholars. Nevertheless, guidelines or rules can surface when someone takes the time to read a lot.

Actual persons and places named in various Mesopotamian stories can be considered fairly reliable. Almost every city named in texts has been found and excavated. When the role of a person has been established in one particular story his character does not change in subsequent stories. The likelihood that a person is real can be enhanced when they appear in legends and on king lists, i.e. Dumuzi/Tammuz, Ziusudra and Gilgamesh. One can get a measure of a piece of literature's popularity and its acceptance by the number of copies that have been found in different cities recorded in dissimilar languages.

As a general rule we can say that pure fiction either was not written at all or it was unpopular. Legendary characters often were subjects in numerous stories written in both Akkadian and Sumerian languages and embellishment was all too obvious. A popular method of increasing readership was to include the local city god. Although the legend of Gilgamesh includes a manufactured person, Enkidu, created as a foil against the king, he is the only character to have a non-human inception besides Adapa (or Adamu) who was "created" by the god, Ea according to legend. Adapa also appears in additional pieces of Akkadian literature. Judging by the wide range where copies and fragments were found and from the various Semitic languages used, the Legend of Adapa was enormously popular from which we may infer that he was someone important.

Eridu

Archibald Sayce (1845-1933) was a famous British Assyriologist and linguist, who held a chair as Professor of Assyriology at the University of Oxford from 1891 to 1919. He spent countless hours in the British Museum transcribing ancient texts from the Near East. In his *Lectures on the Growth of Religion* (1888), he stated: "Babylonian tradition places the Garden of Eden near Eridu."²³ The Sumerian King List²⁴ begins, "When kingship was lowered from heaven it was in Eridu ..."

Eridu, modern Abu Shahrein, the oldest city in southern Mesopotamia, lies eight miles west of Ur, Abraham's hometown, both of which were located on the Persian Gulf at that time. Excavated in 1941-42 by the Iraqi government Eridu was dated by archaeologists to 4800 BC. Fresh water was supplied to Eridu by diverting water from the Euphrates down an ancient dry river bed where the Euphrates once flowed in the distant past (see map). Genesis 2:10 states: "And a river went out of Eden²⁵ to water the garden ..."

With goat grass, emmer, wheat, and barley growing in abundance, date palms and fig trees yielding their fruit, and fish from the Persian Gulf, the addition of fresh water completed the picture of a flourishing small settlement suitable for a newly arrived couple who reputedly were removed from a beautiful garden.

In addition to numerous pottery shards, excavators uncovered a rudimentary shrine on virgin soil after digging through sixteen layers of temples. Atop the altar were found traces of burnt offerings.²⁶ What sort of people could be located at Eridu who would have constructed an altar upon which they presented burnt offerings? Animal sacrifice was instituted by Adam's second son, Abel (Gen. 4:4). We can assume this practice continued with subsequent generations. Was this the very altar where it all began?



Quoting Illustrated London News: "The simple shrine which constituted Eridu's oldest temple (fifth millennium B.C.): it shows the typical features of an altar in a recess, lateral niches, central 'offering table' and door facing the altar." Further, the altar showed, "traces of burnt offerings."

The Legend of Adapa

There is one historical personality who although encumbered with mythological embellishments, bears a striking resemblance to Adam of the Bible - the legendary Adapa. Several fragments of the "Legend of Adapa" were taken from the Library of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh. One also was found in the Egyptian archives of Amenophis III and IV of the fourteenth century BC.²⁷ To date, six fragments of the Adapa legend have been discovered written in various Semitic languages.²⁸ Versions and fragments of the Adapa myth have been found in Akkadian, Canaanitish-Babylonian, Assyrian and Amorite.²⁹ Even a Sumerian version similar to the Akkadian legend was discovered at Tell Haddad.³⁰

According to legend, Ea created Adapa an exemplary man, endowed with "superhuman wisdom," but not eternal life. A fishing accident angered Adapa, who broke the wing of the south wind, and was summoned to

heaven to appear before father-god, Anu. Although he came in sackcloth he was given new clothes for his appearance. Ea had warned Adapa not to eat a certain food or drink any water that would be offered to him. A cautious Adapa shuns the food and water of life, whereby he would have acquired eternal life, and he is sent back to earth to live out his days.³¹

A fragment of one record of the Adapa legend resides in the Pierpont Morgan Library. Inscribed in Amorite, a Semitic language, this is part of the translation:

In those days, in those years, the sage, the man of Eridu,
Ea, made him like a "ridi" (rabbi?) among men;
A sage, whose command no one could oppose;
The mighty one, the Atra-hasis³² of the Anunnaki, is he;
Blameless, clean of hands, anointer, observer of laws.
With the bakers, he does the baking;
With the bakers of Eridu, he does the baking.³³

If the legend of Adapa and the Genesis account of Adam describe the same man we might expect commonalities, and that is what we find.

- Adapa placed at Eridu, Babylonian tradition places the Garden of Eden near Eridu, present-day Abu Shahrein in southern Iraq.
- Adapa named the "concepts of the earth" and Adam named the "creatures of the earth" (Genesis 2:20).
- Adapa created by Ea (god) and Adam was created "in the image" of God (Genesis 1:26).
- Adapa was a "baker" and Adam told he would "eat bread" (Genesis 3:19).
- Adapa described as a seer, blameless, clean of hands, anointer, and observer of laws, this would be descriptive of Adam.
- Adapa broke the wing of the "South Wind" and Adam given "dominion" (Genesis 1:26, 28).
- Adapa brought "ill" upon mankind and through one man "sin entered the world" (Romans 5:12).
- Adapa spoke with Anu, the father-god and Adam talked with God (Genesis 3:9-19).
- Adapa and Adam both called to account for bad behavior (Genesis 3:17-19).

- Adapa was clothed by his father god and Adam was clothed by God (Genesis 3:21).
- Adapa offered the "food and water of eternal life and Adam was cut off from the "tree of life" (Genesis 3:22).
- Adapa told to return to earth and Adam was told he would return to "dust" (Genesis 3:19).

A fair analysis of the similarities found in Genesis and the Adapa legend should persuade even the most cautious skeptic to allow for the possibility or even a likelihood, they are based upon the same person. From this starting point we can posit that all of Genesis 2-11 has historical significance for Adam's descendants, the Semitic peoples – Adamites > Semites > Israelites > Arabs and Jews. Charles Horne published the legend of Adapa in 1917 and included in a footnote, "Adapa, or perhaps Adamu."³⁴

"Created" Individuals in the Near East

<u>Source</u>	<u>Person</u>	<u>Deity</u>	<u>Includes</u>
Egypt	Atum	Ptah	Seth
Mesopotamia	Adapa	Ea	- - -
Genesis	Adam	Yahweh	Seth

Enoch City

Genesis 4:17 relates that Adam's son, Cain, built a city he named "Enoch" after his son. In both Akkadian and Sumerian the en- prefix denotes a king or ruler.³⁵ Thus Enoch became king in the city Cain built. Judging from his name, Adam's second son, Enosh, also ruled over a city called "Erech" that later was part of Nimrod's kingdom named in Genesis 10:10. We can conclude kingship for Enosh at Erech from the scarcity of cities in the region at that time where he could have been king. The Sumerian King List lists Bad Tabira as the second city where kingship was established when "Eridu was smitten with weapons." A war would present a necessity for the rest of Adam's descendants to exit Eridu and establish a settlement next to their cousins.

After the flood Enmerkar, a Sumerian, rebuilt Enoch, "*Unug*" in Sumerian.³⁶ In the legend *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta* (Ararat), the king describes the city he rebuilt as a "majestic bull bearing vigour and great awesome splendour." In his account Enmerkar repeatedly used the phrase, *Unug Kullaba*, "Enoch the twin city."³⁷ Accordingly, Adam's two grandsons would have been kings in their respective adjacent cities, Enoch and Erech, *Unug* and *Uruk* in Sumerian. Today the entire city is called "Warka" and lies about 50 miles north of modern Abu Shahrein as you go along the old Purratum Eridug canal.

Further examples of cities named for biblical characters besides the city of Enoch named for Adam's grandson include the city of Asshur named for Noah's grandson and Birs Nimrud named for Noah's great grandson.

The Great Flood

In addition to leading the excavation of Ur, Leonard Woolley was keenly aware of related Mesopotamian literature. Writing in 1929 Woolley gave this assessment:

For a long time it has been generally conceded that the Genesis story of the Flood is either based upon or derived from the same source as the Babylonian or Sumerian versions; perhaps it is for that reason that critics and commentators have been too ready to relegate the whole narrative to the domain of legend or mythology. The coincidence is really the strongest argument in the opposite sense; the Sumerian story is far inferior in moral content but it does most certainly contain a substratum of historical truth.

In the first place the details are altogether consistent with local conditions of southern Mesopotamia –the disaster as described could have occurred there and could not have occurred in a country of a different character; it was local, not universal, and was what might happen at any time by an abnormal combination of the normal circumstances of a Mesopotamian flood.³⁸



Uruk cylinder seal dated to *ca.* 3000 BC pictures a man dressed in the garb of a king. By his long hair and beard we know he is a Semitic Akkadian. For what reason would an Akkadian king ride in a boat loaded with crates and animals?

The Genesis flood account contains numerous words and phrases that are similar or even identical with other flood narratives such as Atrahasis, Ziusudra, and the eleventh tablet of Gilgamesh listed here in order of origination. The word "earth" is preserved here although "land" is used often in the revised translation.

- "The gods commanded total *destruction*" - Atrahasis II, viii, 34
"... I will *destroy* them with the earth." - Genesis 6:13
- "He [Enki] told him of the coming of the *flood*." - Atrahasis III, i, 37
"And God said onto Noah ... I, even I, do bring a *flood* ..." - Genesis 6:13, 17
- "... the huge boat" - Ziusudra v, 207
"That ship shall be an *ark*." - Atrahasis x, 9
"Tear down this house, build a ship!" - Gilgamesh XI, 24
"Make thee an *ark* ..." - Genesis 6:14
- "*pitch* I poured into the inside" - Gilgamesh XI, 66
"... pitch it within and without with *pitch*." - Genesis 6:14
- "... he sent his family on board" - Atrahasis III, ii, 42
"... into the ship all my family and relatives" - Gilgamesh XI, 84
"Come thou and all thy house into the ark ..." - Genesis 7:1
- "... who protected the *seed* of mankind." - Ziusudra vi, 259
"Bring into the ship the *seed* of all life." - Gilgamesh XI, 27
"... to keep *seed* alive ..." - Genesis 7:3

- "... animals which emerge from the earth" - Ziusudra vi, 253
 "... all the wild creatures of the steppe" - Atrahasis DT, 42(w), 9
 "The cattle of the field, the *beast* of the plain" - Gilgamesh XI, 85
 "Of clean *beasts* and of *beasts* that are not clean ..." - Genesis 7:8
- "the storm had swept ... for *seven days* and seven nights" - Ziusudra
 "For *seven days* and seven nights came the storm" - Atrahasis III, iv, 24
 "... after *seven days* ... the waters of the flood were upon the earth." - Genesis 7:10
- "Below let the *fountain of the deep* be *stopped* ..." - Atrahasis
 "The *fountains also of the deep* ... were *stopped* ..." - Genesis 8:2
- "Ziusudra made an *opening* in the large boat." - Ziusudra vi, 207
 "I *opened the window*." - Gilgamesh XI, 135
 "... Noah *opened the window* of the ark ..." - Genesis 8:6
- "Then I *sent forth* and set free a *raven*." - Gilgamesh XI, 152
 "And he *sent forth a raven*..." - Genesis 8:7
- "The *dove* went out and *returned*." - Gilgamesh XI, 147
 "And he sent forth a *dove* ..." "... and she *returned* unto him ..." - Genesis 8:8,9
- "He *offered* [a sacrifice]." - Atrahasis III, v, 31
 "... and *offered* a sacrifice." - Gilgamesh XI, 155
 "And Noah ... *offered* burnt offerings on the *altar*." - Genesis 8:20
- "That I may *remember* it [every] day." - Atrahasis III, vi, 4
 "I shall *remember* these days and never forget." - Gilgamesh XI, 165
 "... and I will look upon it (the bow) ... that I may *remember* ..." - Genesis 9:16

The Sumerian, Akkadian, and Assyrian accounts, as well as the inspired version in Genesis, are conspicuously related. Probably they arose from one source initially and went separate ways with different groups of people. Numerous words and phrases common to ancient Near East literature and to Genesis confirm a common heritage and enhance the likelihood that the event described, the flood, is a mainstay of Semitic history, and a devastating event that terminated all of Adam's descendants although survived by Noah, his sons and wives, some Sumerians, and the rest of the world.

A Revised King James Version (RKJV) of Genesis

Genesis 1

Questions over Genesis 1 have endured for centuries. Were the sun, moon and stars created on the fourth day or the first day? Were birds taking flight before sea creatures set foot on land, or were flying insects filling the air and pollinizing plant life? Who was created "in his image," generic mankind or one particular man? The KJV is used as the framework for our revised translation.

1:1-31: In the beginning God created the heavens³⁹ and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.⁴⁰ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called the Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth bring forth *vegetation*,⁴¹ the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth *vegetation* and herb yielding seed after *its* kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after *its* kind: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day. And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God *established*⁴² two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he *established* the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and *flying creatures*⁴³ that may fly above the earth in the open sky.⁴⁴ And God created great *sea creatures*,⁴⁵ and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged *creature* after its kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let *flying creatures* multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. And God said, Let the earth

bring forth the living creature after *its* kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after *its* kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after *its* kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after its kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make *Adam*⁴⁶ in our image,⁴⁷ after our likeness: and let *him* have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created *the man*⁴⁸ in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and *fill*⁴⁹ the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the *land*. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the *land*, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the *land*, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the *land* wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Genesis 2

Some Hebrew words do double duty. The Hebrew word for “earth” and “land” is the same. The Hebrew *har* can be “mountains” or “hills,” and whether the author intended “heaven” or “sky” can be determined by translators.

2:4-10: These are the accounts of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, And every plant of the field before it was in the *land*,⁵⁰ and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God *did not cause*⁵¹ it to rain upon the *land*, and the man was not there to till the ground. But there went up a *fountain*⁵² from the *land*, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the LORD God formed *the man*⁵³ of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and *the man* became a living soul. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four *branches*.⁵⁴

Genesis 3

All Adam’s descendants have a single mother in common.

3:20: And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all *living*.⁵⁵

Genesis 4

Cain was not driven off the "face of the earth," only the land.

4:9-14: And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the *land*, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the *land*. And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the *land*; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the *land*; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

Genesis 5

Adam was created in God's "image" as God's representative⁵⁶ to the heathen.

5:1-2: This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created *Adam*⁵⁷, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

Genesis 6

Adam's descendants became corrupted largely from Sumerian influence. The flood terminated those with whom God had established a unique relationship while Noah and family are the faithful remnants.

6:1-13: And it came to pass, when *the Adamites*⁵⁸ began to multiply on the face of the *land*, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of *the Adamites* that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with *the Adamites*, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were *nephilim*⁵⁹ in the *land* in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And GOD saw that the wickedness of *the Adamites* was great in the *land*, and that every imagination of the thoughts

of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made *the Adamites* on the *land*, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy *Adam's descendants* whom I have created from the face of the *land*; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the birds of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The *land* also was corrupt before God, and the *land* was filled with violence. And God looked upon the *land*, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the *land*. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the *land* is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the *land*.

Genesis 7

The Hebrew *har* can be "mountains" or "hills," and translators determine whether "heaven" or "sky" is the operative word.

7:1-24: And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. Of birds also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the *land*. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the *land* forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the *land*. And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the *land*. And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creepeth upon the *land*, There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the *land*. 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 deep⁶⁰ broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the *land* forty days and forty nights. In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing⁶¹ that creepeth upon the *land* after his kind, and every bird after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him:

and the LORD shut him in. And the flood was forty days upon the *land*; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it was lift up above the *land*. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the *land*; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the *land*; and all the high hills, that were under the whole *sky*⁶², were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the *hills*⁶³ were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the *land*, both of birds, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the *land*, and all *Adamites*: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry *land*, died.

Genesis 8

Noah survives the flood and presents his offering.

8:1-22: And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the *land*, and the waters assuaged; The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; And the waters returned from off the *land* continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.⁶⁴ And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the *hills* seen. And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the *land*. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole *land*: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the *land*. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him anymore. And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the *land*: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the *land* dried. And God spoke unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of birds, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the *land*; that they may breed abundantly in the *land*,

and be fruitful, and multiply upon the *land*. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, and whatsoever creepeth upon the *land*, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark. And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savor; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for *Adam's*⁶⁵ sake; for the imagination of the *Adamite* heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Genesis 9

A warning is issued to those who would harm God's children and a covenant is established with Noah.

9:1-7: And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the *land*. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the *land*, and upon every bird of the air, upon all that moveth upon the *land*, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of an *Adamite*;⁶⁶ at the hand of every brother will I require the life of an *Adamite*. Whosoever sheddeth an *Adamite's*⁶⁷ blood, by an *Adamite* shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he *the Adamites*. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the *land*, and multiply therein.

Genesis 10

After hundreds of years rebuilding their numbers the sons of Noah were dispersed.

Genesis 11

Mudbrick platforms were built to provide safety from future floods. These grew into massive ziggurats dedicated to city gods. The incident at Babylon loomed large to those living there at the time likely from the line of Arphaxad.

11:1-13: And the whole *land* was of one *lip*,⁶⁸ and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the *land* of Shinar;⁶⁹ and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and *tar*⁷⁰ had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of *Adam*⁷¹ builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people *are as one*,⁷² and they have all one *conversation*;⁷³ and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the *land*: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the *speech* of all the *land*: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the *land*. These are the generations of Shem: Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood: And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And Arphaxad lived an hundred and thirty-five years, and begot *Cainan. And Arphaxad lived after he had begotten Cainan, four hundred years, and begot sons and daughters, and died. And Cainan lived a hundred and thirty years and begot Salah; and Canaan lived after he had begotten Salah three hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters, and died.*⁷⁴

Conclusions

If theologians paid more attention to evidence and placed less emphasis on tradition better translations and interpretations more closely aligned with the facts of science and history would have surfaced long ago. With church membership in decline across the nation and in Europe it should be obvious that a change is in order.⁷⁵

Although we can never know for sure exactly how the Israelites would have understood these passages, we can deduce with a degree of certainty that Adam and his descendants entered a populated world and they had to know that from the beginning. Ubaidans and Sumerians occupied the same space and interacted with the Semitic Akkadians for hundreds of years. We can only surmise that Jews living at the time of Christ would have known their early history and would have understood Genesis contextually as it is translated here.

Genesis should be considered legitimate Semitic/Jewish history describing real people and real events with valuable lessons from which we can all profit. Hopefully, a more accurate translation faithful to the original Hebrew yet cognizant of the history of the ancient Near East and current scientific understanding will put gears in motion to produce updated versions of Genesis rendered in English accordingly, and give future generations texts that are believable and historically astute from the first chapters.

Notes

¹Ethan Siegel, "Only Evidence, Not Well-Crafted Arguments Can Settle Scientific Debates," *Forbes Science*, April 28, 2020.

²Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 11.

³Brueggemann, *Genesis : Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, 12.

⁴Brueggemann, *Genesis : Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, 14.

⁵T. L. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives*, BZAW133 (Berlin: De Gruyter. (1974), 328.

⁶Iain Provan, V. Philips Long and Tremper Longman, *A Biblical History of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 24.

⁷William Lasor, David Allan Hubbard and Frederic Wm. Bush, *Old Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982, 6.

⁸Alister McGrath's *Christian Theology an Introduction* lists "tradition, reason, and religious experience" as primary aids to interpretation. Extra-biblical evidence is not mentioned.

⁹Carl Sagan, *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark* (New York: Random House, 1995), 199.

¹⁰For a complete explanation of Adam and Eve not considered as either the first humans or the ancestors of all humans see Roy Clouser's article, "Reading Genesis" (*PSCF* 68, no. 4 [2016]: 237-261).

¹¹John E. Pfeiffer, *The Creative Explosion* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982), 121.

¹²Denis Lamoureux argues against a historical Adam in his article, "Beyond Original Sin: Is a Theological Paradigm Shift Inevitable?" in *PSCF* Vol. 67, No. 1, March 2015, 35-49.

¹³James A. Sauer, "The River Runs Dry - Biblical Story Preserves Historical Memory," *Biblical Archaeological Review* 22(4) (1996): 57.

¹⁴James Hastings, *A Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 1, 644.

¹⁵S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1938), 39.

¹⁶Charles Doria, Harris Lenowitz, and Jerome Rothenberg, eds., *Origins: Creation Texts from the Ancient Mediterranean* (Garden City, Anchor Books, 1976), 3.

¹⁷Charles Doria, Harris Lenowitz, and Jerome Rothenberg, eds., *Origins: Creation Texts from the Ancient Mediterranean*, 4, 5.

¹⁸See *Ptah* <<http://www.egyptianmyths.net/ptah.htm>> (2 Nov. 2019).

¹⁹Veronica Ions, *Egyptian Mythology* (New York: P. Bedrick Books, 1982), 28.

²⁰Ions, *Egyptian Mythology*, 28.

²¹Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin, *Old Testament Parallels* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006), 8.

²²James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 3.

-
- ²³Archibald Sayce, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by the Religions of the Ancient Babylonians* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1888), 238.
- ²⁴King Lists recorded in Sumerian also contain non-Sumerians. On at least one list of pre-flood kings Ziusudra is the tenth king before it states, "then the flood swept thereover." Furthermore, a father and son relationship can be established with the three listed kings. If Ziusudra is the Sumerian name for Noah then the last three patriarchs, Methuselah, Lamech and Noah are listed by their Sumerian equivalents, Ubartutu, Sukurlam and Ziusudra.
- ²⁵The Akkadian/Sumerian word *edin* refers to a plain, prairie or desert.
- ²⁶Seton Lloyd, "The Oldest City of Sumeria: Establishing the Origins of Eridu," *Illustrated London News*, 11 Sept 1948, 303.
- ²⁷Albert T. Clay, *A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 39-41.
- ²⁸Izre'el, Shlomo, *Adapa and the South Wind: Language has the Power of Life and Death*, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 5.
- ²⁹Canon John Arnott MacCulloch, ed., *The Mythology of All Races* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1964), 175.
- ³⁰Antoine Cavigneaux and Farouk Al-Rawi, "Gilgameš et Taureau de Ciel (šul-mè-kam) (Textes de Tell Haddad IV)," *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie orientale* 2, 87 I-III. Paris (1993), 92-93.
- ³¹Clay, *A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform*, 40.
- ³²Atrahasis, exceeding wise, is used in the Akkadian flood epic to describe the hero.
- ³³Clay, *A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform*, 41.
- ³⁴Charles F. Horne, ed., *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East* (New York: Parke, Austin, and Lipscomb, Inc., 1917), 225.
- ³⁵The Sumerian King List records numerous kings with the en- prefix. Enmenluanna, Enmengalana, Ensipadgidana, and Enmendurana are examples of kings who reigned before the flood.
- ³⁶The Sumerian King List: Translation <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/section2/tr211.htm>> (20 May 2020).
- ³⁷Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta Translation <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/section1/tr1823.htm>> (16 May 2020).
- ³⁸C. Leonard Woolley, *The Excavations at Ur and the Hebrew Records* (London: G. Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1929), 16-17.
- ³⁹The Hebrew word is plural and has no singular version.
- ⁴⁰A "day" considered as a period of time wherein God performs acts of creation. See: "The Days of Creation Hours or Eons," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*, March, 1990, vol. 42, no 1: 15-22.
- ⁴¹Hebrew, *deshe'*, meaning "grass" or "vegetation." NIV translates "vegetation."
- ⁴²Hebrew, *'asah*, translated "made" in the KJV. The word for create, *bara* in Hebrew, is not in the text, and the heavenly bodies were created on Day One when God created heaven and earth. On Day Four they were appointed, commissioned or ordained by God as timekeepers for the sighted creatures that would appear on Day Five and Day Six. An alternative would be to say that God "had made" to indicate this was a completed action that occurred in the past. Gleason Archer maintained: "The Hebrew verb 'wayya 'as' in v. 16 should better be rendered 'Now [God] had made the two great luminaries, etc.,' rather than as simple past tense, [God] made."
- ⁴³This would be too soon for literal birds as they appear in the fossil record after dinosaurs which are land creatures and don't appear until later in sequence on Day Five. Flying insects would be necessary to pollinate some of the vegetation created on Day Three, and here *'owph*, translated "flying creatures" is more appropriate.
- ⁴⁴"Sky," Hebrew *shamayim*.

-
- ⁴⁵"Whales" in the KJV are mammals and would be out of order here. "Great creatures of the sea" appears in the NIV.
- ⁴⁶Hebrew, *'adam*. Although generic "mankind" is conceivable, it would be unlikely that an Israelite author intended to include Gentiles.
- ⁴⁷The entire phrase could be understood as: Let us delegate some authority for Adam to operate as a representative.
- ⁴⁸Hebrew, *he 'adam*, literally, "the man." Although "man" is used in the KJV, the phrase following says, "*in the image of God created he him*," indicating a single, individual male. Who could that have been besides "Adam"? With Adam's continued obedience, perhaps, all mankind could have followed his example and become accountable to God.
- ⁴⁹Hebrew, *male'* meaning "to fill," rendered "replenish" in the KJV. NIV uses "fill."
- ⁵⁰Hebrew, *'erets* meaning "land" or "earth" depending on context. In the narrow environment of southern Mesopotamia where the Genesis narrative begins "land" is preferable.
- ⁵¹There is no past perfect verb tense in Hebrew, and knowing the history of the ancient Near East would have been beneficial. NIV: "for the Lord God had not sent rain on the earth," a case in point. This region of Mesopotamia, present-day Iraq, was desert, although somewhat wetter than it is today, and received only infrequent rainfall. It would be inconceivable to imagine rain had not occurred from the time of the creation of the earth until God created Adam. What caused the rivers to flow in Genesis 2:10-14 for example?
- ⁵²From the Septuagint. This pertains to the irrigation system in southern Mesopotamia. "Fountains" in Akkadian and Sumerian refers to the dykes, levies and constructed equipment that was part of their canal system.
- ⁵³Hebrew, *he 'adam*, the creation of the man placed in the Garden of Eden applies specifically to Adam.
- ⁵⁴The *edin* refers to the land between the Hiddekel (Tigris) and Euphrates rivers, also known as Mesopotamia. Water was diverted from the Euphrates down an old riverbed where the Euphrates had once flowed before the channel was altered in the distant past. This canal was divided into two, the Purretum & Eridu canal and the Purretum & Iturungal canal which resulted in four branches that provided fresh water to the cities of Eridu, Ubaid, Digdigah and Ur.
- ⁵⁵Eve as "the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20) causes some to conclude that all humanity derives from Adam's God-bestowed help mate. The Hebrew word *chay*, translated as "living," can be either an adjective or a noun. As an adjective it modifies a missing noun. Used as a noun, it can mean "descendants." In this sense all of Adam's family emanates from Eve.⁵⁵ Significantly, it introduces a biblical standard for marriage, Adam had no other wives or concubines.
- ⁵⁶Adam represented God, having been "created in His own image." This status was passed through the godly line of Seth (Gen. 5:3). Noah and his generations were God's chosen people, and thus were "in the image" (Gen. 9:6). This status as representatives of God was conferred upon the Israelites through the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 17:1-8). This unique status for Israel as God's chosen people was rescinded, or at least modified, at the cross. Christ was appointed by God as his representative. The second Adam, Christ, was in the "image of God" (II Cor. 4:4) just as the first Adam, and the mantle was passed to the followers of Christ.
- ⁵⁷The Hebrew *'adam* was translated "man" because that was what the translators thought, that Adam was the progenitor of the entire human race.
- ⁵⁸Hebrew, *he 'adam*. Those belonging to the nation of Israel are "Israelites." Descendants from Adam should be termed, "Adamites." The descendants of Noah are Semites, Hamites and Japhethites, according to the Bible, although those who lived in Mesopotamia and spoke a Semitic language are called "Akkadian" or "Semite" by historians regardless of

whether they descended from Ham or Shem. Japhethites generally lost their identity when they headed west after Noah's sons disbursed described in Genesis 10.

⁵⁹Translated "giants" in the KJV. *Nephilim* in Hebrew derives from the root word "to fall," and is used in the NIV.

⁶⁰The phrase "fountains of the deep" appears in the Atrahasis epic. A period of drought precedes the great flood during which time the fountains dry up such that the fields are not nourished with water. Here in Genesis also the reference is to implements used for irrigation.

⁶¹The words "all" and "every" in typical Hebrew parlance are less expansive than what the English words normally convey to us. Thus when the psalmist declares "all my bones are out of joint" (Psa. 22:14), we need not ponder how 206 bones could get out of joint.

⁶²Hebrew, *shamayim* translates either "heaven" or "sky" depending on context.

⁶³Hebrew, *har* translates either "mountains" or "hills" depending on context.

⁶⁴Ancient Urartu, an area anywhere from east to north to north by northwest of the ark's launching point probably from Shuruppak, modern Fara, in southern Mesopotamia, present-day Iraq.

⁶⁵Hebrew, *he 'adam*.

⁶⁶The entirety of Genesis 9:1-17 describes a covenant relationship from God with Noah, his sons and their generations.

⁶⁷Hebrew *he 'adam*. The entire phrase is a warning to those outside the Adamic race that even though God's chosen race may be judged by God they are not to be harmed by outsiders.

⁶⁸Hebrew, *saphah* meaning "lip," and in the Septuagint This word was translated "lip" 162 times by the KJV translators, only seven times did they use the word "language." Although tradition has fallen on the side of one universal language being spoken, this doesn't fit the facts. The nearby Sumerians spoke an unrelated language. So at least two languages were spoken in Shinar, or Sumer, at this time, notwithstanding there were unrelated languages spoken in other parts of the world. In the context of the Ancient Near East this was the period of ziggurat building in southern Mesopotamia and must have been a frequent topic of conversation.

⁶⁹Hebrew for "Sumer."

⁷⁰From the NIV. Hebrew *chemar*, meaning a thick petroleum substance such as pitch, asphalt, or bitumen.

⁷¹Hebrew, *bene he 'adam*, literally sons (or descendants) of Adam.

⁷²Corrected for grammar.

⁷³Hebrew, *saphah* for lip, speech, language or in this case, topic of conversation. The sense here is that God must put an end to this continual topic of conversation by confounding their speech. We can infer the topic under discussion concerned building the ziggurat in a misguided effort to impress God, or perhaps, a local city god such as Marduk.

⁷⁴From the Septuagint, in accord with Jubilees and Luke 3:36.

⁷⁵A Pew Research report dated April 30, 2015 titled, "Changing U. S. Religious Landscape" concluded: "Between 2007 and 2014 the Christian share of the population fell from 78.4% to 70.6% driven mainly by declines among mainline Protestants and Catholics."