

THE SUMERIAN ACCOUNT OF THE FLOOD

The tradition of the Flood long persisted among the peoples of the Mesopotamia Valley, the Cradle of Civilization. In antiquity, Mesopotamia was known as *Sumer*, then *Akkad*. It was the ancient home of Abraham, the father or progenitor of the Hebrew people. In this valley, the history of the Flood was preserved by oral tradition and upon written cuneiform tablets.

Early in the 20th Century, archeologists uncovered in ancient Nippur (north-central Babylon) the oldest written tradition of the Flood yet to be discovered. Unfortunately, only one-third of this “deluge” tablet is extant: it is dated sometime before 2000 B.C. A translation was published in 1914 by Arno Poebel. A more modern translation with an introductory summary can be found in *Ancient and Near Eastern Texts*, James B. Pritchard, edit. (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 2nd edition, 1955), pp. 42-44. This Sumerian tablet is inscribed on both sides in three columns. The following is a brief summary of the contents:

- Columns 1 & 2 These include as somewhat of an introduction a number of important statements concerning the creation on man, the origin of kingship, and the existence of at least five key antediluvian cities. Although the context of the story is obliterated in several places, it can be discerned that a deity is addressing other deities stating his intent to save mankind from destruction. As a result, men will establish cities and temples to the gods. In succeeding lines, five cities are established, kingship over which came directly from deity in heaven.
- Column 3 Unfortunately, the text then become obscure. S.N. Kramer, the foremost 20th Century scholar on ancient Sumer, says, “... these lines must have dealt largely with the decision of the gods to bring the flood and destroy mankind.” We are then introduced to Ziusudra, the Sumerian counterpart of the Biblical Noah. Ziusudra is a god-fearing, pious king-priest.
- Column 1 –
backside Ziusudra is instructed to stand by a wall where he receives a divine communication concerning the impending destruction of mankind by a flood. It was the purpose of the gods to destroy man.
- Column 2 –
backside Another break of 40 lines occurs in the text. Kramer says, “The text must have continued with detailed instructions to Ziusudra to build a great boat and thus save himself from destruction.” When the text becomes legible, Ziusudra is riding out the storm in a huge boat. Who or what else were with him is not clearly found in the extant text, but line 211 clearly indicates he took a number of animals with him (Kramer makes this observation too). The storm rages for 7 days and 7 nights. When it is over, Ziusudra offers sacrifices to the sun-god Utu.

Column 3 – The story ends with Ziusudra receiving eternal life and being transported to
backside Dilum, a paradise-like abode, literally “the place where the sun rises,” and
 there he is caused to dwell.

For a comparison of the Biblical account of the Flood with the Sumerian and Akkadian (Assyrio-Babylonian), see my notes entitled “Sumerian and Akkadian and other accounts of the Flood”.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF HARMONIZING GENESIS 1 & 2 WITH GEOLOGICAL UNIFORMITARIANISM & EVOLUTION

- ❖ According to Genesis 1, all basic kinds of land plants, including fruit trees, were created on the 3rd day, two days before the creation of marine creatures.

Evolutionary geologists insist that marine creatures came into existence hundreds of millions of years before fruit trees. The Bible teaches the opposite. (In other words, evolutionary geology says that life first originated in the sea; the Bible teaches that life began on the land.)

- ❖ Genesis 1 states that birds and fowl life were created on the 5th day, but the geological time table has birds following reptiles by millions of years. Genesis 1 states that reptiles were actually created on the 6th day, that is, the day after bird life.
- ❖ Genesis 1 states that insects (*creeping things*) were created in the 6th day, three days after flowering plants were created; this would be impossible if the days were ages because pollination requires insects.
- ❖ If *asah* is the equivalent of *bara* in v. 16, then the sun, moon, and stars came into existence after the earth on the 4th day; whereas, evolutionists assume the sun existed before the earth itself was formed. (This would prove that God, not the sun, is the source of the earth's creation.)
- ❖ Genesis 1 states that great sea monsters were created on the 5th day; whereas, evolution teaches that the first sea animals were sub-microscopic single celled creatures and that whales had to evolve from four-legged land animals, who in turn evolved from cold-blooded marine creatures.
- ❖ Genesis 2:7 teaches that until creation, Adam was lifeless (the same terminology used for sea life in Genesis 1:21 – *nephesh hayah*). Evolutionary anthropologists teach that all complex life forms were preceded by simpler life forms. (This not only contradicts the Bible, but also the first and second laws of thermodynamics.)
- ❖ Genesis 2:7 teaches that Adam was formed from dusts. Dust means dust (Genesis 3:19)! Evolutionary anthropologists teach that man came via ape flesh.
- ❖ The Bible teaches that Adam's flesh was not subject to decay until after the fall that is recorded in Genesis 3:6-19; but evolution teaches that Adam came through flesh that was subject to decay.
- ❖ The Bible teaches that the first woman was created from Adam's side while evolution teaches that man and woman evolved simultaneously.

- ❖ Genesis 1 teaches a many-family tree concept (kind = *min*, Hebrew for *species*); hence, order and symmetry in genetics. Evolutionists teach a single-family tree concept, hence, chaos genetically.
- ❖ Genesis 1 states that birds and fishes were created at the same time; but geological evolution teaches that fishes evolved millions of years before birds developed.
- ❖ Genesis 1 stresses ten times that the entities created reproduced *after their kind*; evolutionary anthropologists postulate the slow ascent of organisms from one common ancestor.
- ❖ Genesis 2 says Adam gave names to all the animals that God had formed. Geology says most of them were extinct long before man was on the earth.
- ❖ Genesis 2:1-3 states that *all the host of things God created and made* was finished in 6 days and God ceased any further work of creation; but evolutionary geologists insist that the creative processes went on and, in fact, are still going on.
- ❖ Genesis 2 says that God rested on the 7th day: if days are geological ages, then God would still be resting. Ridiculous.

Conclusion

It is impossible to believe the Biblical account of creation and believe in evolution too. They invariably contradict each other. Charles Darwin realized this. Many Christians, in fact, most Christians have given little or no thought to the implications of evolution and geological uniformitarianism.

Darwin came to the place where having once studied for the ministry, he had to reject the Bible as a source of truth. Yours is the same choice and God will let you choose. He will not coerce your volition. By rejecting the Bible as truth, you commit yourself to intellectual schizophrenia.

SUMMARY: DISTINCT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION & THE GENESIS ACCOUNT OF CREATION

Genesis Account

1. Teaches that plant life began on land (plant life, including fruit trees, was created on the 3rd day, marine creatures after on the 5th day.)
2. Teaches a many-family tree concept (*after his kind* repeated 10 times; *kind* = Hb. *min* = species): hence, order and symmetry in genetics.
3. Teaches the sun, moon, and stars came into existence after the material earth.
4. Teaches that fishes and fowl life were created on the 5th day (before reptilian and other land animals).
5. Teaches that maritime life, including great sea monsters and whales, was created on the 5th day.
6. Genesis 2:1-3 states that *all the host* of things that God *created* and *made* was finished in 6 days and that God ceased any further work of creation.
7. Teaches Adam was formed from *dust* (and would return to the same *dust* at death, Genesis 3:19).
8. Teaches that the first woman was created directly by God from Adam's side.
9. Teaches that Adam was lifeless dust until God formed him and breathed life into him.

Evolutionary Theory

1. Teaches marine creatures came into existence hundreds of millions of years before fruit trees.
2. Teaches a single-family tree (all life stemming from the same root and trunk, hence, chaos genetically): one common ancestor for all life.
3. Assumes the sun existed before the earth was formed.
4. Teaches that birds followed reptiles by millions of years and reptiles followed fishes by millions of years.
5. Teaches that the 1st sea animals were sub-microscopic single celled creatures and that whales evolved millions (billions?) of years later from four-legged land animals which had evolved from cold-blooded marine creatures.
6. Insists that "creative" processes took billions of years and are, in fact, still going on.
7. Teaches that man came via ape flesh.
8. Teaches that the woman evolved side by side with the man.
9. Teaches that man evolved through flesh of animals.

EVIDENCE THAT THE DAYS OF GENESIS 1 WERE 24 HR. DAYS, NOT “GEOLOGICAL AGES”

- When the Hebrew word for day (*yom*) is accompanied by a definite number (first, second, third, etc.) as it is here, it always means a 24-hour day.

1:5 *God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.*

1:8 *And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.*

1:13 *So the evening and the morning were the third day.*

1:19 *So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.*

1:23 *So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.*

1:31 *Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*

- In Genesis 2:2, God is said to have rested on the 7th day.

And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

If this were an “age” as some say the days of Genesis are, then God would still be resting.

- In Exodus 20:9-11, Moses uses the six creative days of God as a pattern for Israel’s work week (with rest on the seventh day).

⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Moses wrote Genesis 1 as well as Exodus 20! If the days of Genesis 1 were indefinite eras of time, Moses must have been confused when he wrote Exodus 20! Such a theory makes mockery of grammar and the use of words in divine revelation.

- The division of time into days, seasons, and years in Genesis 1:14 can only be used in reference to 24-hour periods and not geological eras.

Then 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 seasons, and for days and years;"

- Are we to assume that a geological era has an evening and a morning? The use of the qualifying phrase, *there was evening and there was morning*, points to a 24-hour day-night cycle.

ESTABLISHING OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY

WHEN DID ABRAHAM LIVE?

Written in 1965 by Ron Merryman

One of the primary objectives in the reconstruction of the history of any nation is the establishment of its chronology. Not until an exact and dependable chronological reckoning has been established may the historian move forward with confidence toward the correct interpretation and grouping of the events of that state and of its neighbors.

Thus we must seek to establish some absolute date in the history of Israel which can be used as a starting place for the establishment of other dates in a desired chronological scheme; but in the Old Testament, no absolute dates are given. Our only hope of doing this then is to find some major point of contact where Hebrew history ties with certainty into the history of some other nation whose chronology has been correctly established. Fortunately, in the early periods of the Hebrew kings, the most frequent and definite contacts were with Assyria and in the later period with Neo-Babylonia. The chronologies of these two nations have been quite definitely established largely on the basis of two sources, *The Eponym Lists of Assyria* and the *Canon of Ptolemy*.

From these known chronologies, we can fix both the date of Shalmanesar III's war with King Ahab (Israel) at the battle of Qarqar (sometimes spelled "Karkar") as 853 B.C. From here the chronological events of Hebrew history can be reconstructed on Biblical evidence alone. In this paper, we are interested in establishing the time of Abraham.

The Eponym ("Name") Lists of Assyria

- ❖ These are lists of individual years named after some important governmental official of Assyria. Several lists are in existence and serve as a check against each other.
- ❖ An eclipse described in one of these eponym years (the eponym of "Bur-Sagale") by astronomical computation can be accurately dated June 15, 763 B.C. (This date is further confirmed on the basis of the *Canon of Ptolemy*.) Counting backward and forwards, Assyrian events can be accurately dated for 892 to 648 B.C.

The Canon of Ptolemy (a Greek geographer of Egypt, ca. A.D. 70-161)

- ❖ This *canon* or chronology charts the reign from Nabonassar of Babylon in 747 B.C. to Antonius Pius (Rome) 161 A.D. Various Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman successors are included.
- ❖ This *canon* is of tremendous importance to the modern historian because of Ptolemy's extensive and detailed astronomical notations. The checks furnished herein to astronomical science prove that his chronology is accurate from beginning to end.
- ❖ This *canon* overlaps the *Eponym Lists* for the years 747 to 648 B.C., thus furnishing a check point in our efforts to fix an absolute date. Both of these lists fix the accession of Sargon II (of Assyria) over Babylon to the year 709 B.C. They also agree on the eclipse of June 15, 763 B.C. They check.

A Fixed Date in Hebrew History

The link between Assyrian chronology and Israel is based upon a correlation of events which begin and end in the twelve year period of 853-841 B.C.

- 853 B.C. The battle of Qarqar – King Ahab (Israel) is mentioned in the *Eponym List* as having fought against Shalmanesar III. Later in the same year Ahab dies in a battle with the Syrians at Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kings 22:29-37).
- 841 B.C. Shalmanesar II (Assyria) mentions receiving tribute from King Jehu (Israel) in his (Shalmanesar's) 18th year. In Biblical chronology, Ahab's last year of reign is 853 B.C.; Jehu's first is 841 B.C. and in between are the twelve years of Ahaziah (1 Kings 22:51) and Joram (2 Kings 3:1). These twelve years appear to be fourteen in our Bibles because of Israel's peculiar method of numbering the reignal years: Edwin R. Thiele explains this problem very adequately (see his book referenced below).

Figuring from these fixed dates, we can construct a chronology for Hebrew history as follows:

		Source:
Eclipse	763 B.C.	<i>Canon of Ptolemy & Eponym Lists of Assyrians</i>
Accession of Jehu	841 B.C.	Same – See also 1 Kings 22:29-37
Last year of Ahab-Battle of Qarqar	853 B.C.	Same
Division of Kingdom (Death of Solomon)	930 B.C.	Figured from above dates collated with 2Chronicles 1-22; 1 Kings 1-10; Jehu back to Solomon
Temple Founded	966 B.C.	1 Kings 6:1
Accession of Solomon	970 B.C.	1 Kings 11:42 (Reigned 40 years)
The Exodus	1446 B.C.	480 years before 4 th year of Solomon's reign (1 Kings 6:1)
Entrance of Patriarchs in Egypt	ca. 1876	Exodus 12:40, 41 (430 years in Egypt)
Birth of Jacob	ca. 2006	Geneses 47:9
Birth of Isaac	ca. 2066	Genesis 26:26
Birth of Abraham	ca. 2166	Genesis 21:5

Conclusion: Bible chronology from the time of David to the present has been firmly established: J. Barton Payne says it is absolute. Previous to David, there are difficulties raised by archeologists, Biblical scholars, and philologists which put question marks on any "absolute" dates. However, if we grant a margin of error of minus 200 years, Abraham still lived in Ur around 2100 or 2000 B.C. This would place him near or even in the midst of the Sumerian renaissance, a time when Ur reached her Golden Age!

For further study, the student is urged to read:

Payne, J. Barton *An Outline of Hebrew History*, pp. 33-36, 121-124. Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1954.

Thiele, Edwin R. *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1965 Rev. Ed. Of particular interest is Ch. 3, "The Establishment of an Absolute Date in Hebrew Chronology," pp. 39-52.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Genesis 12:1-3 *Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.³ I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

Immediately after the fall of man God revealed His purpose to provide salvation for sinners. This program of salvation is gradually unfolded by God in His Word. The promises made to Abraham (The Abrahamic Covenant) represent a vital step in this progressive revelation; the understanding of this covenant is basic to understanding the doctrine of salvation and, as far as I'm concerned, to the appreciation of history.

The Initiation, Confirmation, & Enlargement of The Abrahamic Covenant

- ❖ God spoke to Abraham while he was living in Ur in the home of Terah, an idolator. Joshua 24:2; Acts 7:2-3; Nehemiah 9:7.
- ❖ God commanded him to leave Ur, even though it entailed a journey to a strange land he knew not of, Hebrews 11:8:

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

The word *know* means *to put one's attention on, to fix one's thoughts on*; thus, he did not fix his thoughts upon the nature of the country to which he was going, Genesis 11:31:

And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there.

The original covenant given in Genesis 12:1-3 depended upon one condition, Abraham's obedience to remove himself to a land God had chosen for him.

- ❖ Abraham in partial obedience went to Haran with his kindred (Genesis 11:31). None of the original promises of the covenant were confirmed or realized there: only after Terah's death does Abraham remove to Canaan (Genesis 12:4) and there God reaffirms the covenant (Genesis 12:7).
- ❖ Thus, after this initial obedience-condition was fulfilled, God instituted an irrevocable, unconditional program for Abraham and his heirs that is confirmed and enlarged in Genesis 12:6-7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14; 22:15-18.

The Provisions of The Abrahamic Covenant

God promised the following things:

- 1 Abraham's name will be great.
- 2 A great nation will come from him.
- 3 He will be a blessing so great that in him will all the nations of the earth be blessed.
- 4 To him personally and to his seed should be given forever the land of Palestine.
- 5 The multitude of his seed should be as the dust of the earth.
- 6 Whoever would bless him would be blessed, and whoever would curse him would be cursed.
- 7 He should father many nations.
- 8 Kings would proceed from him.
- 9 The covenant will be perpetual or everlasting.
- 10 The land of Canaan will be *an everlasting possession*.
- 11 God will be a God to him and to his seed.
- 12 His seed would possess the gate of his enemies.
- 13 In his seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

Distinctions within the promises:

- The promise to Abraham personally:

God promises His personal blessing on Abraham; his name would be great; he would father a great nation, etc.

- The promise of Abraham's seed:

The nation would be great (Genesis 12:2) and innumerable (Genesis 13:16; 15:5); the nation would possess the land (Genesis 17:7-8); etc.

- The promise to Gentiles and other Ethnic groups:

All families are promised blessing through Abraham (Genesis 12:3). This is a general blessing and as such includes many things such as the blessings of the written Word of God, Messiah, Israel, etc.

- Fulfillment of the promises.

Since these promises are unconditional and based upon the veracity of God's own Word and character, we can anticipate their literal fulfillment in history. As you study Israel's

history, you will find some have been fulfilled; others wait fulfillment. God will not suffer His Word and Promise to be brought to naught: this He portrayed to Abraham in the experience recorded in Genesis 15:8-21.

For more and better reading on this subject, see:

Peters, G.N.H., *The Theocratic Kingdom*, Vol. I., pp. 290-302.

Walvoord, John F., "The Millennial Series", *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 108: pp. 415-427, 109: pp. 37-42, 137-142.

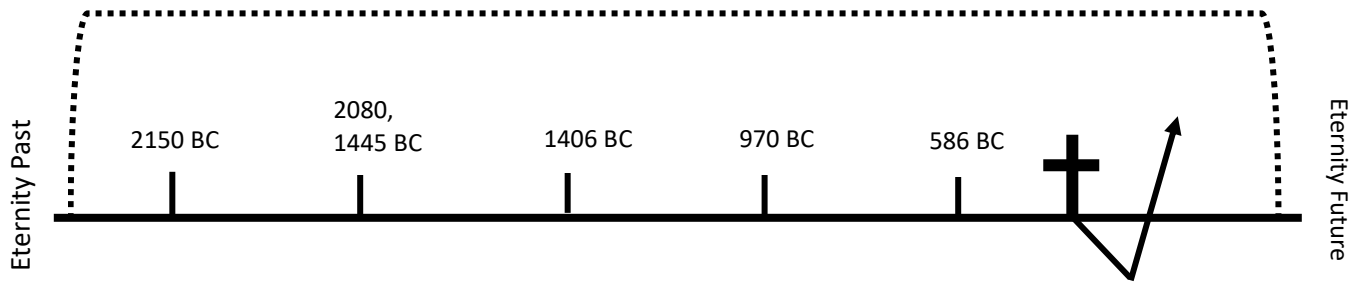
Pentecoste, J.D., *Things to Come*, pp. 65-94.

Covenants in the Bible

(Covenant = A contract between two parties)

Eternal Redemptive Covenant – made in eternity past between God the Father & God the Son. The eternal Son agreed to shed blood, which, of course, required His incarnation. The Father covenanted to resurrect Him, Hebrews 13:20-21:

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.



<p>Abrahamic Covenant (eternal) - God to Abraham</p> <p>Land, Seed, Blessing - Promises Gen 12:1-3, 6,7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21</p> <p>Called Everlasting in Gen 17:7, Psalm 105:9-11</p>	<p>Mosaic Covenant (temporal) - God to Israel</p> <p>Ex 19:1-25, 34:1-35</p> <p>Christ is the end of the Law, Rom 10:4</p> <p>Defined God's role to Israel & vice versa</p>	<p>Palestinian Covenant (eternal) - God to Israel</p> <p>Land – Deut 30:1-8</p> <p>Ownership unconditional. Immediate possession - conditional on obedience Land is forever, & everlasting, Ezek 16:60</p>	<p>Davidic Covenant (eternal) - God to David</p> <p>Seed – 2 Sam 7:12-14</p> <p>House of Messiah - His kingdom in perpetuity, His throne or right to rule is forever, Psa 89:3,4, 8, 34-36</p>	<p>New Covenant (eternal) - God to Israel</p> <p>Blessing – Jer 31:31-34, Ezek 36:24-28</p> <p>Future Millennial blessings for Israel: regeneration, indwelling H.S., sins forgiven. Called forever in Jer 31:36</p>
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