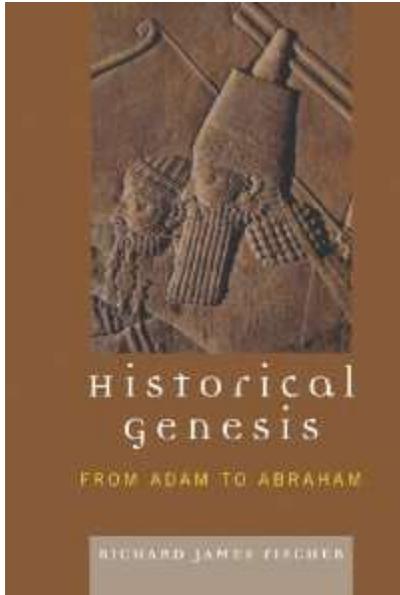


Genesis Proclaimed Association

Toward a Revised Genesis Translation



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 translation adjustments to the sacred text. Rooted in the 1611 King James Version, Genesis has blossomed into puzzling modern versions to keep us humble yet perplexed even today. Just a cursory reading of the Genesis 2-11 narrative places early patriarchal history entirely 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 the significance. If these much-maligned chapters of Genesis are translated and understood as Adamic/Semitic history, and not as human history, they make

good sense. Efforts by liberal apologists to relegate Genesis to a “genre,” or as “prehistory,” or “proto-history” are unwarranted.

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. Largely Paul was rejected. Although Romans proclaimed the emperor a god and the Greeks had many gods, Jews knew only one God. Considering Jesus to be God in human form was considered blasphemous to many of his 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 history perceived as human history.

Christians in the Roman Empire suffered over two centuries of persecution until Constantine's reign as emperor from 307 to 337AD, when Christianity became respectable as the state-sanctioned religion. When Julian ascended to the throne in 361AD he viewed Christianity as a threat and sought to restore paganism by discrediting Roman Christians who proclaimed themselves descendants of Adam. By pointing out this flaw in ancestry Julian thought he could persuade newly-converted Christians their new-found religion was similarly flawed. Fortunately for the course of Christianity, but unfortunately for Christian apologetics, he failed.

Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of clay tablets lay buried in the Mesopotamian desert awaiting discovery in the 19th and 20th centuries to shed new light and understanding on sacred Scripture. We can only wonder at how these buried secrets, had they been known, could have shaped commentaries written by early church fathers that influenced Christian theology through the centuries. As a consequence, biblical exegetes waded into Genesis unassisted by historical evidence and left us with oftentimes conflicting opinions.

When the King James translators produced an English version of the Bible in 1611 they labored under the same mindset as early believers. The entire human race derived from Adam and Eve, they thought, and therefore the population of the whole earth was corrupted from Adam's sin through a direct line of descent. The flood must have been worldwide in their manner of thinking, survived only by a family of eight with a boatload of animals to regenerate the world's entire animal population, crossing oceans and deserts without leaving any traces of their long journeys. All the world's human population derived from Noah's descendants, it was thought, they were gathered at Babel (Babylon) after the flood, and scattered in small groups speaking newly minted languages, eventually populating the entire globe.

The King James Version (KJV) translators converted Hebrew to English lacking the knowledge of mitigating anthropological evidence that would have guided them to making better decisions. They misunderstood the Genesis text written in Hebrew, skewed the resultant English text, and virtually canonized the tradition that arose 1600 years earlier that has survived among conservative Christians to this day. Subsequent Genesis translations have modernized the text to some extent, but due to a meager knowledge of ancient Near East history and its applicability, tradition endures unmitigated by common sense or from readily available evidences known to scientists and historians for well over a hundred years.

Upon a casual reading of the text the first eleven chapters of Genesis as translated in any version do not accord with a knowledgeable world view which includes over 200,000 years of existence for our species and a common origin with creatures more hairy somewhere around 6 million years ago. We will see, however, that this seeming Bible-science impasse is more apparent than real. With different times of origin between the human race and the Semitic race in mind a question that might concern us is whether Adam was connected to the phyletic tree of life through human parents and natural childbirth, or whether he was created *de nouveau* out of the dust with a DNA sequence compatible with generic humans. Such a question might be worth exploring but it is beyond the scope of this article.¹

Genesis as Semitic History

Wrestling with the Genesis text over the years has resulted in two popular Christian methods of explanation: Genesis is seen as true human history (conservative), or as an inaccurate portrayal of human history but with lessons attached (liberal). A third method is based upon the Hebrew

text aided the history of the ancient Near East, and views Genesis as authentic Semitic history unrelated to human history.

A summarization of the characteristics of these three methods follows:

1. Conservative (creationist)
 - Respects biblical authors, but
 - Ignores science
 - Overlooks history
 - No evidence, only tradition
2. Liberal
 - Respects science, but
 - Downgrades biblical text
 - Ignores history
 - No evidence, only supposition
3. Evidence based
 - Reveres biblical authors, and
 - Esteems science
 - Incorporates history
 - Anchored by multiple sources of evidence

It is this author's contention that a fair hearing in front of an impartial panel of Christians, who had no preconceptions, would result in option three being the overwhelming choice.

Some caveats need to be addressed before we dig into the text. One could argue that the conclusions expressed here are a departure from tradition. Unfortunately, tradition was established largely upon a 1611AD translation, and that is being questioned here. A change in translation would necessarily alter our understanding and in time affect the tradition upon which it is based. A tradition drawn from mistranslation and misinterpretation would necessarily be wrong. If we change the translation by considering ANE history whereas it has previously been ignored, then tradition must give way lest we saddle future generations with errant hermeneutics and a Bible that skeptics will deride continually into the next millennium.

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.² Adam must have lived somewhat less than 10,000 years ago judging from the mention of farming,³ tents, domesticated animals, stringed musical instruments, and implements of copper and iron (Gen. 4:20-22). The location is apparent from the inclusion of the Tigris (Hiddekel) and Euphrates rivers among the four rivers surrounding the Garden. The Pishon and Gihon are a little more obscure but quite likely can be identified as the "Kuwait River"⁴ that once flowed out of Saudi Arabia and the Kashkan River that begins in the region of Cush, or Kush, named for Noah's grandson. Today this region is called Khuzistan, a province in the southwest corner of Iran, formerly home to the *Kassi* of the cuneiform texts.⁵ Jewish historian Josephus, who lived at the time of Christ, suggested the Gihon may have been the Nile, thus throwing off searches for Eden for 2,000 years.⁶

NEAR EAST PERIOD	YEARS	BIBLICAL PERIOD
Paleolithic (Old Stone Age)	18,000 to 8,000 BC	
Natufian	10,000 to 8000 BC	
Neolithic (New Stone Age)	8000 to 5000 BC	
Hassuna	6000 to 5250 BC	
Samarra, Halaf, Eridu	5500 to 4700 BC	Adam
Ubaid	4500 to 3500 BC	Cain, Seth
Uruk	3500 to 3100 BC	Noah
Jemdet Nasr	3100 to 2900 BC	Flood
Early Dynastic (Bronze Age)	2900 to 2370 BC	Shem to Peleg
Sumer and Akkad	2500 to 2000 BC	Tower of Babel
Old Babylonia, Larsa	2000 to 1600 BC	Abraham
Cassite (Iron Age)	1600 to 911 BC	
Assyrian	911 to 612 BC	
Neo Babylonian	625 to 539 BC	

Historical Adam

If Adam has significance beyond simply existing as an actual living historical personality and the first of the covenant race, it would reside in his status as federal head of mankind introduced by God to begin an era of accountability. Epic tales, stories and fragments of literature obtained from parts of the Middle East provide a rationale for believing Adam has a historical basis that can be substantiated.⁷ Parallel literature provides clues as to the identity of a man who for all intents and purposes should be our man, Adam. And if we can confirm that the covenant couple, Adam and Eve, has an identifiable niche in time and space, that would preclude other explanations that have been served up to explain the Genesis 2-11 narrative. Was Adam a mythical construct as part of a fictional storyline to teach theological lessons?⁸ No, not if he actually lived. Did Adam walk the earth tens of thousands of years ago and was he the first human being?⁹ Not remotely possible given his Neolithic surroundings.

Egyptian Theology

From as far away as Egypt clues can be found in creation myths that can help us authenticate the beginning chapters of Genesis. 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 stories that arose from different parts of the country.

The Shabaka Stone once rested in the Temple of Ptah in Memphis in the 8th century BC. The text claims to contain the surviving content of a worm-ridden, decaying papyrus found as pharaoh Shabaka (721-707 BC) was inspecting the temple of Ptah in Memphis. Dubbed the “Memphite Theology,” it was here the chief god of the capital city of Memphis, “Ptah,” the “life-maker,” sat upon his throne: “There took shape in the heart, there took shape on the tongue the form of Atum.”¹⁰

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 ...¹¹

According to the priests of Memphis, Ptah, the high god of Memphis, was declared "creator of the world"¹² and in the Memphite system Atum was the agent of Ptah's will, who understood his commands and carried them out.¹³ Ptah, is described as the unifier of Upper and Lower *Chem* (Egypt), "'Self-begotten,' so says Atum, who in turn 'created the "Nine *Neteru*.'" Among the "*Neteru*" (deities) begotten of Atum was one called "Seth."

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 ...¹⁴

The pyramids of kings Mer-ne-Re and Nefer-ka-Re were inscribed with a dedication dating to earlier than 2100 BC, many centuries before Moses. The text describes 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 a son named "Seth."¹⁵

What is the possibility that the subject of these texts is someone other than Adam? How many "created" individuals do we know of named Adam or Atum with a son named Seth? Unless we subscribe to colossal coincidences it has to be the same person. The Inscriptions on pyramid walls are dated before Abraham, and centuries before Moses. A question that might arise could be: How in the world did they get there?

A possible answer to that question comes from Josephus. In his words: "Now all the sons of Mizraim, being eight in number, occupied the country from Gaza to Egypt ..."¹⁶ Indeed, the Hebrews adopted *Misraim* to mean "Egyptian." All of Mizraim's sons have been traced to parts of Egypt. Perhaps as Egyptian conscripts or members of an elite population, the descendants of Mizraim could have been the source of the inscriptions as well as the source of the knowledge of Atum (Adam) and Seth who became incorporated into Egyptian mythology. Even a proto-Genesis could have been stored in an Egyptian library for the benefit of Moses who was educated in pharaoh's court.¹⁷ This might explain the remarkable similarity between Genesis and the Book of Jubilees.¹⁸

Adam and the Legend of Adapa

Legends and epic tales sprang from the fertile minds of Mesopotamian scribes and were copied for centuries. Concerning mortal men we have, for example, twelve tablets of Gilgamesh, the romantic adventures of King Dumuzi and the goddess Inanna, Ziusudra in Sumerian, Atrahasis in Akkadian, Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta (Ararat). Tales of Akkadian gods Enki, Enlil and Marduk were also quite popular. What these ANE stories have in common is that the characters

are either deities, male or female, or kings. We can assume the public's attention was drawn to these categories almost to the exclusion of any other, "almost" that is, because of one notable exception. This man was neither god nor king. He was a priest living in Eridu (present-day Abu Sharein), his name as translated comes to us as "Adapa."¹⁹

Although encumbered with mythological embellishments, there is one story that could quite likely have been based upon the life of Adam. Several fragments of the Adapa legend were taken from the Library of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh. One also was found among the Amarna tablets in the Egyptian archives of Amenophis III and IV dated to the fourteenth century BC.²⁰ To date, six fragments of the Adapa legend have been discovered written in various Semitic languages.²¹ Versions and fragments have been found written in Akkadian, Canaanitish-Babylonian, Assyrian and Amorite.²² A Sumerian version similar to the Akkadian legend was discovered at Tell Haddad in Syria.²³ Of note here is that versions were recorded in languages tied to tribes on different branches of Noah's family tree. Who would have been important enough or so well known that descendants of both Ham and Shem would have propagated stories about him?

This is part of the Adapa legend translated from the Akkadian version:

He perfected him with great intelligence,
to give instruction about the ordinance of the earth.
To him he gave wisdom, he did not give him eternal life.
In those days, in those years, the sage, a native of Eridu,
Ea²⁴ made him (his) follower among people.²⁵

Commonalities

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

1. Adapa placed at Eridu, Babylonian tradition places the Garden of Eden near Eridu, present day Abu Sharein in southern Iraq.
2. Adapa named the "concepts of the earth" and Adam named the "creatures of the earth" (Genesis 2:20).
3. Adapa created by Ea (god) and Adam was created "in the image" of God (Genesis 1:26).
4. Adapa was a "baker" and Adam told he would "eat bread" (Genesis 3:19).
5. Adapa described as a seer, blameless, clean of hands, anointer, and observer of laws, this would be descriptive of Adam.
6. Adapa broke the wing of the "South Wind" and Adam given "dominion" (Genesis 1:26, 28).
7. Adapa brought "ill" upon mankind and through one man "sin entered the world" (Romans 5:12).
8. Adapa spoke with Anu, the father-god and Adam talked with God (Genesis 3:9-19).
9. Adapa and Adam both called to account for bad behavior Genesis 3:17-19).
10. Adapa was clothed by his father god and Adam was clothed by God (Genesis 3:21).

11. Adapa offered the “food and water of eternal life and Adam was cut off from the “tree of life” (Genesis 3:22).
12. 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 they are based upon the same person, and that he was a living human being. 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.”²⁶

Reflecting on ancient naming patterns, often the name of an important ancestor was carried to subsequent generations. The second king on the Assyrian king list was called “Adamu” after his more famous namesake. In tablets recovered at Tello, Adamu was recorded among the proper names.²⁷ Besides the Assyrian king, the name cropped up often in Akkadian texts from the reign of Sargon the Great. “Adamu” was found in records discovered at the Canaanite city of Ebla. One of the governors under Igris-Halam, first Eblaite king, was named “Adamu.”²⁸

Consider too that when Akkadian words are carried into Hebrew, the nominative “*u*” is dropped. Thus, Akkadian *ilu* for god²⁹ becomes *El* in Hebrew – meaning, God. And dropping the “*u*” in Akkadian, Adamu becomes the Hebrew, “Adam.”

In William Shea’s article, “Adam in Ancient Mesopotamian Traditions,” he concluded with the following:

While these lines of evidence do not constitute proof for the historicity of Gen 3, they are germane to the discussion of the problem, and it is of considerable interest that the name of the first human personage in biblical history has been recovered in a similar context from an extra-biblical source.³⁰



“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.”³¹

A Historical Flood

The biblical flood is the first event in the history of mankind that has archaeological and written extra-biblical evidence to confirm its historicity. Beginning in 1928 Leonard Woolley excavated Sumerian Ur. His digging crews uncovered pieces of artifacts beneath the foundations of the lowest tomb with clay tablets comingled with loose debris. The inscriptions bore characters deemed to be older than previous finds. By his reckoning he had reached 3000 BC when a clay floor was reached. Upon close examination, Woolley determined that the clay had once been dissolved. His next step was to measure the depth of the layer of clay. After digging through nearly ten feet of clay another level of civilization was revealed. Painted potsherds were from a civilization more primitive than the ones he had already uncovered, and later were identified as "Ubaid."³² Mud bricks and even kiln-baked bricks were found at this level.³³

Woolley reasoned that two dissimilar civilizations separated by almost ten feet of “water-laid” clay could mean only one thing. An ecstatic Woolley reached a conclusion and sent a telegram that electrified the world of 1929. “We have found the flood,” an ecstatic Woolley

proudly announced. Invigorated by his find, Woolley encouraged excavators at other sites to look for flood layers. Sure enough, flood layers or more cautiously "sterile stratum" of various thicknesses were found. At last, thought Woolley, archeology had established evidence for what had long been a controversial Bible story - the great flood. But that feeling of euphoria would not endure.

Dating archeological digs in the absence of deposits of volcanic ash lacks the kind of precision archaeologists prefer, but by using a rate-of-deposition technique and pottery analysis, the thick flood stratum Woolley found at Ur was placed at the early fourth millennium, about 3800 BC. Notwithstanding, a higher, thinner layer was uncovered dated to 2700 BC, but it wasn't considered.³⁴

Langdon and Watelin excavated Kish in 1928-29. They dated the bottom clay layer, which amounted to about one foot in thickness, to 3300 BC which seemed to lend support to Woolley's claim, even though the dates were 500 years apart. The thickest layer at Kish was at a higher level, however, and assigned a date somewhat closer to the thinner layer found at Ur.

M. E. L. Mallowan excavated the more northern city of Nineveh and uncovered several strata of mud and riverine sand totaling six feet in depth. Diplomatically, he called this a "pluvial interval," placing it at the fourth millennium, similarly dated to Woolley's lowest layer. But then, flood deposits at Kish, Shuruppak, Uruk, and Lagash were considered and a consensus put all of these layers at nearly a thousand years later than Woolley's renowned find, averaging around 2900 BC.³⁵ This prompted a debate turning on who had uncovered the biblical flood—the most important flood in human history—and it left Woolley in a somewhat of a quandary. He had wasted time and energy if his dramatically announced deposit was from the wrong flood.

In the end, the flood layer Woolley thought was from Noah's flood was too early in relation to the other sites, while the higher layer he had discounted, dated closer to the other sites, seemed scrawny by comparison. Ironically, the lower, earlier, and thicker layer Woolley thought was from *the flood* resulted apparently from an unrecorded event, while the higher, later, and thinner layer he thought was from only a flood, may have been deposited by *the flood*.

The cities that suffered a massive flood in the Euphrates plain around 2900 BC³⁶ were in Akkad, the middle cities of southern Mesopotamia located northwest of Sumer, which would have contained Adamite populations. Jemdet Nasr (3100–2900 BC) artifacts were separated with clay deposits two feet and five feet thick respectively from Early Dynastic I (2900–2750 BC) remains at Shuruppak and Uruk.³⁷ Ur was a Sumerian city at that early date and Semites did not occupy Nineveh until the Asshur expedition in the post flood period (Gen. 10:11 KJV).

Archaeological Flood Dates

Periods	Dates	Ur	Kish	Shuruppak	Uruk	Lagash	Nineveh
Early Dynastic	2370 BC						
	2900 BC	—————	————— ————— ————— —————	—————	—————	—————	
Jamdet Nasr	2900 BC						
	3100 BC						
Uruk	3100 BC		—————				
	3500 BC						
Ubaid	3500 BC	————— —————					—————
	4500 BC						

Dates of clay layers discovered in excavated cities. The various depths are indicated by line width. Courtesy SCM Press, Andre Parrot, *The Flood and Noah's Ark*, 1953.

A theological analysis would posit that the judgment of the flood was intended for a select group who were accountable for their actions. It wasn't the Sumerians or Egyptians whose thoughts were only "evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). It was those whom God had appointed, who almost from the beginning began to "call upon the name of the Lord (Gen. 4:26). At this juncture, however, the Lord was "grieved at his heart" (Gen. 6:6) and a cleansing Flood ensued.



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?

Parallel Verses

Considering the present-day distribution of animals around the globe along with the fossilized remains of their ancestors in the same locales, this fact alone precludes a global flood at such a late date, and the Genesis account harmonizes with local legends. Distinctive story elements and phrases that are common to two or more of these stories indicate a common origin. According to Robert Best, "Parallel quotations make it obvious that these flood stories did not originate independently."³⁸

Common words and phrases used in Genesis and parallel accounts such as: "heart," "flood," "ark," "cubits," "seed," "beast," "pitch," "seven days," "fountain(s) of the deep," "opened the window," "raven," "dove," "sweet savor," and "remember" establish a compelling case for common sources and a common event.

Portions of texts shown here in order of origination are from Atrahasis in Akkadian, Ziusudra in Sumerian, the eleventh tablet of Gilgamesh, Genesis 6-9 and Babylonian priest, Berossus.³⁹

"when their *heart* led the great gods to produce the flood." - Gilgamesh XI, 14
 "... the thoughts of his *heart* was only evil continually." - Genesis 6:5

"The gods commanded total *destruction*" - Atrahasis II, viii, 34
 "... the decision that mankind is to be *destroyed*" - Ziusudra iv, 157-158
 "... I will *destroy* them with the earth." - Genesis 6:13

"He [Enki] told him of the coming of the *flood*." - Atrahasis III, i, 37
 "...over the capitals the storm will sweep." - Ziusudra iv, 156
 "And God said unto Noah ... I, even I, do bring a *flood* ..." - Genesis 6:13, 17
 "Kronos...said ...mankind would be destroyed by a *flood*." - Berossus

"... 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
"... build a boat." - Berossus

"*pitch* I poured into the inside" - Gilgamesh XI, 66
"... *pitch* it within and without with *pitch*." - Genesis 6:14
"some people scrape *pitch* off the boat" - Berossus

"Ten dozen *cubits* the height of each of her walls" - Gilgamesh XI, 57
"... and the height of it thirty *cubits*." - Genesis 6:15

"... into the ship all my family and relatives" - Gilgamesh XI, 84
"... he sent his family on board" - Atrahasis III, ii, 42
"Come thou and all thy house into the ark ..." - Genesis 7:1
"... he sent his wife and children and friends on board" - Berossus

"... 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
"... and put both birds and animals on board" - Berossus

"the storm had swept ... for *seven days* and seven nights" - Ziusudra
"For *seven days* and seven nights came the storm" - Atrahasis III, iv, 24
"Six days and seven nights the wind and storm" - Gilgamesh XI, 127
"... after *seven days* ... the waters of the flood were upon the earth." - Genesis 7:10

"Enter the boat and close the boat's door." - Atrahasis DT, 42(w), 6
"I entered the boat and closed the door." - Gilgamesh XI, 93
"... and the LORD shut him in." - Genesis 7:16

"... consigned the peoples to *destruction*." Atrahasis III, iii, 54
"... and they were *destroyed* from the earth ..." Genesis 7:23

"Below the *fountain of the deep* was *stopped*" - Atrahasis D, ii, 30
"The *fountains also of the deep* and the windows of heaven were *stopped* ..." - Genesis 8:2

"On *Mount Nisir* the boat grounded." - Gilgamesh XI, 140
"And the ark rested ... upon the *mountains* of Ararat." - Genesis 8:4
"... the boat had grounded upon a *mountain*" - Berossus

"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

"... he *prried open* a portion of the boat." - Berossus

"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

"... let out the birds and they again *returned* to the ship." - Berossus

"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

"built an *altar* and sacrificed to the gods" - Berossus

"[The gods *smelled*] the *savor*' - Atrahasis III, v, 34

"The gods *smelled the sweet savor*" - Gilgamesh XI, 160

"And the Lord *smelled a sweet savor*..." - Genesis 8:21

"He touched our foreheads to *bless* us" - Gilgamesh XI, 192

"And God *blessed* Noah ..." - Genesis 9:1

"I lived in the temple of Ea, my lord." - Atrahasis RS 22.421, 7

"... go down to dwell with my lord Ea." - Gilgamesh XI, 42

"... and Noah walked with God." - Genesis 6:9

"he had gone to dwell with the gods" - Berossus

"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

Josephus, Jewish historian during the time of Christ, wrote: "Now all the writers of barbarian histories make mention of the flood, and of this ark ..." ⁴⁰

Changes in Translation Can Affect Our Entire Perspective

The first step toward understanding Genesis in context is recognizing that what was passed down to the children of Israel beginning in Genesis 2 was an abbreviated history of their race, the covenant race, not the whole human race as it has been commonly misunderstood.

The days of creation⁴¹ appear to be in a roughly similar order geologists would agree upon with some caveats. Overlapping days may be seen as vegetation (*deshe'*) produced on Day Three provided nourishment for animals that came along on Day Five and Six. "Fruit trees" (Gen. 1:11) on the third day appear to be too soon, and certainly were not in existence before fish on Day Five, however, these verses say nothing about modern fruit trees. The Hebrew term includes seed-bearing trees, and shade trees that do not bear edible fruit. ⁴² Conifers were among the first land-based vegetation, and calling them "fruit trees" is consistent with the Hebrew. Day

Four is a day of pronouncement, not a creative act. The focus is on the purpose for the heavenly bodies, not on their coming into existence.⁴³

On Day Six, *'adam* made “in our image” (Gen. 1:26), translated “man” in the KJV and “mankind” in the NIV, leaves us to ponder if that would embrace 200,000 years or more of *Homo sapiens*. Was *Homo erectus* included? What would be the limits? Although a word for “man,” *'ish* in Hebrew⁴⁴, could have been used to include those outside the covenant relationship, the author chose *'adam* which more likely was Adam persona, husband to Eve, father to Seth, and the first person in a covenant relationship with his Maker.

The verb tense in the phrase, “it had not rained” (Gen. 2:5) throws the entire verse out of kilter. The past perfect tense is forced on the text, whereas the phrase, “it did not rain” would be a more appropriate translation. The idea that no rainfall occurred on planet earth for billions of years prior to Adam is also derived in part from the term, “fountains of the deep” (Gen. 7:11, 8:2) that any Akkadian or Sumerian living during that time would have understood as a reference to their irrigation works. Specifically, Adam is the man under discussion and his generations in this and following chapters, not mankind in general.

Eve 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.⁴⁵ Significantly it introduces a biblical standard for marriage, Adam had no other wives or concubines.

The word “land” is preferable to “earth” as a suitable translation of the Hebrew *erets* here and throughout in light of the narrow confines of the entire Genesis narrative until Abraham departs Sumerian Ur. The city of Enoch that Cain built (Sumerian *Unug*) gives us a significant and important clue as to the location and approximate time that Adam and his immediate generations lived.⁴⁶

Ages of the patriarchs in all translations are taken from the Masoretic Text and differ in some instances from the ages given in the Greek Septuagint, i. e., from the flood to Abraham is 292 years in the MT and 942 years in the LXX. All things considered the Septuagint appears to be the better source.⁴⁷

Although mention of the Nephilim (Gen. 6:4) translated “giants” in the KJV provides a little intrigue (Who are the “watchers” in Jubilees and what have they to do with the story?), the focus should be on those for whom the flood was necessary. It was the sinful Adamite population (Gen. 6:5-7) that was intended for destruction by means of a devastating flood.

Although the “waters prevailed exceedingly” and “all the high hills (*har*) were covered” (Gen. 7:19), yet in the next verse, the “mountains” (*har*) were covered” (Gen. 7:20). As elsewhere, “hills” is the operative word. Instead of “mankind” a more restrictive term such as “Adam’s descendants” (Gen. 7:21) identifies the target population and curtails the idea that the flood was a mankind obliterating event.

“Ararat,” where the ark came to rest (Gen. 8:4), was known as “Urartu” by the Assyrians and “Aratta” by the Sumerians. In the Sumerian tale of “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” this

phrase appears: “My sister, let Aratta fashion gold and silver skillfully on my behalf for *Unug* (for the Sumerian population living in the reconstructed city of Enoch/Uruk).”

Retribution for the sin of Adam and the moral depravity of his descendants influenced by their Sumerian neighbors necessitated the flood. Afterwards, God warns those outside the covenant family, those who were not descendants of Noah, to keep their hands off God’s chosen or suffer consequences (Gen. 9:6).

According to Jubilees Noah’s sons and their families remained in the vicinity where the ark landed for the 350 years Noah remained alive so they could reconstitute and build their numbers. Then Noah gave them walking papers. In the days of Peleg the “land was divided” or allocated among the tribes (Gen. 10:25). Here in Genesis 10 the dispersion and relocation of Noah’s kin is described in some detail. The eventual whereabouts of nearly every named person and tribe has been identified providing further historical corroboration.⁴⁸

The opening verse in Genesis 11 is focused on the descendants of Arphaxad living in Babylon, where the “whole land was of one lip⁴⁹ and one speech” (Gen. 11:1). Universally this has been misunderstood. Only by considering the circumstances pertaining to those living in southern Mesopotamia at that time are we able to ferret out the meaning. Mud brick platforms used as a means of flood survival grew to become the great ziggurats that were an integral part of every major city and dedicated to pagan city gods. These were civic works projects demanding an extraordinary amount of community effort as each city tried to out build its neighboring cities thereby elevating their own god in the eyes of the other gods. Thus, a topic of conversation dominated everyday discussions – they “were of one lip.” From Babylon the hapless residents took advantage of the confusion and fled to other parts of Mesopotamia with Abram’s father, Terah, relocating to Ur (Gen. 11:28).

Retranslating the Text

Popular translations following “tradition” have not deviated from the initial understanding established 2,000 years ago. The intention here is to put into the heads of translators what is known today about earth science and ancient history. The following suggested translations are from a sampling of key verses in various versions that currently are either misleading or just plain wrong.

Genesis 1

1:11 (KJV): And God said, “Let the earth bring forth *vegetation*⁵⁰, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after *its* kind ...”

1:16 (KJV): And God *established*⁵¹ two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he *established* the stars also.

1:20-22 (KJV): And God said, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and *flying creatures*⁵² that may fly above the *land* in the open firmament of heaven.”⁵³ And God created great *sea creatures*⁵⁴, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged *creature*⁵⁵ 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 *birds*⁵⁶ multiply in the earth.”

1:26 (ASV): And God said, “Let us make *Adam* (‘*adam*) in our image, after our likeness ...”

1:27 (KJV): So God created *the man*⁵⁷ (*ha’adam*) in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them ...

1:26-27 (NIV): Then God said, “Let us make *Adam* (‘*adam*) in our image ...” So God created *the man* (*ha’adam*) in his own image ...

Genesis 2

2:5-6 (NIV) Now no shrub had yet appeared on the *land* and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God *did not send* rain on the *land* and *Adam* (‘*adam*) *was not* there to work the ground, but a *river*⁵⁸ came up from the *land* and watered the whole surface of the ground.⁵⁹

2:7 (ASV): And Jehovah God formed *the man* (*ha’adam*) of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and *the man* (*ha’adam*) became a living soul.

2:13 (KJV): And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of *Cush*.⁶⁰

2:20 (KJV): And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a *helper suitable*⁶¹ for him.

Genesis 4

4:11-14 (KJV): 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

5:1-2 (NIV): This is the written account of Adam’s family line. When God created *Adamites*⁶² (‘*adam*) he made them in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them “*Adam*” (‘*adam*) when they were created.

Genesis 6

6:5-7 (NIV): The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the *descendants of Adam* (*ha’adam*) had become on the *land*, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the *Adamite* (*ha’adam*) heart was only evil all the time. The LORD regretted that he had made the *Adamites* (*ha’adam*) on the *land*, and his heart was deeply troubled. So the LORD said, “I will wipe from the face of the *land Adamites* (‘*adam*) I have created ...”

6:11-12 (ASV): And the *land* was corrupt before God, and the *land* was filled with violence. And God saw the *land*, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the *land*.

6:13 (KJV): 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*.”

6:17 (ASV): “And I, behold, I do bring the flood of waters upon this *land*, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is in the *land* shall die.”

Genesis 7

7:3-4 (KJV): Of fowls 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*.

7:6 (ASV): And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the *land*.

7:12 (KJV): And the rain was upon the *land* forty days and forty nights.

7:17-24 (NIV): For forty days the flood kept coming on the *land*, and as the waters increased they lifted the ark high above the *land*. The waters rose and increased greatly on the *land*, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. They rose greatly on the *land*, and all the high *hills* under the entire *land* were covered. The waters rose and covered the *hills* to a depth of more than fifteen cubits. Every living thing that moved on land perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the *land*, and all *Adam's* descendants (*'adam*). Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. Every living thing on the face of the *land* was wiped out; people and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds were wiped from the *land*. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark. The waters flooded the *land* for a hundred and fifty days.

Genesis 8

8:4-7 (KJV): And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the *hills*⁶³ 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*⁶⁵ 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*.

8:13-14 (ASV): And it came to pass in the six hundred 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 dried. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the *land* dry.

8:21 (KJV): 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* (*'adam*) sake ...”

Genesis 9

9:1 (KJV): And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the *land*.”

9:6 (NIV): “Whoever sheds *Semite (ha’adam)*⁶⁶ blood, by a *Semite (ha’adam)* shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God ⁶⁷ has God made the *Semites (ha’adam)*.”

9:11 (KJV): And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there anymore be a flood to destroy the *land*.

Genesis 10

10:32 (NIV): These are the clans of Noah’s sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the *land* after the flood.

Genesis 11

11:1 (NIV): Now the whole *land* had one *lip*⁶⁸ and one *topic of conversation*.

11:3 (KJV): And they had brick for stone, and *tar*⁶⁹ had they for mortar.

11:5-9 (KJV): And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of *Shem*⁷⁰ (*ha’adam*) builded. And the LORD said, “Behold, the people *are as*⁷¹ one, and they have all one *conversation*⁷²; 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 *speech*⁷³, 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*.

11:5-9 (NIV): But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the *Semites (ha’adam)* were building. The LORD said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.” So the LORD scattered them from there over all the *land*, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel —because there the LORD confused the *speech* of the whole *land*. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole *land*.

11:12-13 (KJV): 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

Genesis should be considered legitimate Semitic/Jewish history describing real people and real events with valuable lessons from which we can all profit. If theologians paid more attention to

“evidence” instead of focusing on “tradition”⁷⁵ better translations and interpretations more closely aligned with the facts of science and history would have surfaced long ago.

Hopefully, the awareness of 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 a text that is believable and historically relevant in all versions from the very first chapters.

Notes

1. If a lab wanted to put its resources into deciding this question a y-chromosome analysis of Jewish males compared with males from the general population might be interesting.
2. For 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).
3. John E. Pfeiffer, *The Creative Explosion* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982), 121.
4. James A. Sauer, "The River Runs Dry - Biblical Story Preserves Historical Memory," *Biblical Archaeological Review* 22(4) (1996): 57.
5. James Hastings, *A Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 1, 644.
6. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* – Book 1, Chapter 1, Para. 3.
7. For evidence of a historical Adam, see Dick Fischer, "In Search of the Historical Adam, Part 1." *PSCF*, December, vol. 45, no. 4: 241-251, and "In Search of the Historical Adam, Part 2." *PSCF*, March, vol. 46, no. 1: 47-57.
8. Denis 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.
9. Finding a timeframe where Adam of Genesis can be placed such that he could have started the entire human race has been a persistent difficulty faced by the *Reasons to Believe* ministry founded by Hugh Ross.
10. Charles Doria, Harris Lenowitz, and Jerome Rothenberg, eds., *Origins: Creation Texts from the Ancient Mediterranean* (Garden City, Anchor Books, 1976), 3.
11. Doria, Lenowitz, and Rothenberg, eds., *Origins: Creation Texts from the Ancient Mediterranean*, 4, 5.
12. Veronica Ions, *Egyptian Mythology* (New York: P. Bedrick Books, 1982), 28.
13. Ions, *Egyptian Mythology*, 28.
14. Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin, *Old Testament Parallels* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006), 8.
15. James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 3.
16. Flavius Josephus, *Complete Works*, 88.
17. Mizraim or those in his immediate family could have possessed the information found in Genesis today up to chapter 10, the dispersion of the descendants of Noah. The Tower of Babel incident would have been known to those in the line of Shem and Arphaxad located at Babylon after the dispersal.
18. The Book of Jubilees, sometimes called "Little Genesis," is an ancient Jewish religious work containing numerous parallel passages with Genesis. It is considered canonical by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Ethiopian Jews. Jubilees is considered one of the pseudepigrapha by the Roman Catholic Church, Protestant and Eastern Orthodox Churches. It was known to early Christians and included in the writings of Epiphanius, Justin Martyr, and Origen to name a few.
19. Dick Fischer, "In Search of the Historical Adam, Part 2," *PSCF* Vol. 46, No. 1 (March 1994): 47.
20. Albert T. Clay, *A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 39-41.
21. Shlomo Izre'el, *Adapa and the South Wind: Language has the Power of Life and Death*, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 5.
22. Canon John Arnott MacCulloch, ed., *The Mythology of All Races* (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1964), 175.
23. Antoine 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.
24. Akkadian creator god and god of wisdom. Enki in Sumerian pantheon.
25. Izre'el, *Adapa and the South Wind*, 10.
26. Charles F. Horne, ed., *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East* (New York: Parke, Austin, and Lipscomb, Inc., 1917), 225.

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27. *Tablettes Chaldéennes inédites*, 7.
 28. Giovanni Pettinato, *The Archives of Ebla* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1981), 274.
 29. Archibald Sayce, "The Archaeology of Genesis XIV," *The Expository Times* XVII, 11 (Aug 1906): 499.
 30. William H. Shea, "Adam in Ancient Mesopotamian Traditions," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* XV, 1 (Spring 1977): 41.
 31. Seton Lloyd, "The Oldest City of Sumeria: Establishing the Origins of Eridu," *Illustrated London News*, 11 Sept 1948, 303.
 32. Max Edgar Lucien Mallowan, "Noah's Flood Reconsidered," *Iraq*, n. s., 26 Pt 2 (Autumn 1964): 70.
 33. Lloyd, "Ur-Al 'Ubaid, 'Uquair and Eridu," 29.
 34. Max Edgar Lucien Mallowan, "Noah's Flood Reconsidered," *Iraq*, n. s., 26 Pt 2 (Autumn 1964), 72.
 35. Gleason Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), 208.
 36. For an opinion on a possible earlier flood date see: Alan Dickin, "New Historical and Geological Constraints on the Date of Noah's Flood," *PSCF* Vol. 70, No. 3 (Sept. 2018): 178-193.
 37. Mallowan, "Noah's Flood Reconsidered," 80.
 38. Robert M. Best, *Noah's Ark and the Ziusudra Epic* (Fort Meyers: Enlil Press, 1999), 24.
 39. Babylonian priest Berossus was a contemporary of Alexander the Great who died in Babylon. Berossus wrote a history of Babylon titled *Babyloniaca* that has only been partially preserved by inclusion in other texts. Berossus identified the place where Abraham lived as "the city of Babylonia, called Camarina (which, by some, is called the city Urie, and which signifies a city of the Chaldeans)."
 40. Flavius Josephus, *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Whiston's translation (London: George Bell and Sons, 1889), 81.
 41. For an explanation of the days of creation understood as long times of indefinite length see "The Days of Creation: Hours or Eons," *PSCF* 42 (March 1990): 15-22.
 42. Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1944), 40.
 43. The Septuagint states: "God indeed made the two great luminaries, the greater luminary for the regulations of the day, and the lesser luminary, with the stars, for the regulations of the night ..." Thus on the first day God created the sun, moon, and stars followed by the earth, and on the fourth day, God appointed the sun to govern the day and commissioned the moon and stars to rule the night. God designated the heavenly bodies on the fourth day to function as timekeepers for the sighted creatures to come on day five and six.
 44. It can be perplexing when 'adam is translated "man," especially when a word for generic man or mankind is used in other verses, 'ish in Hebrew or 'enash in Aramaic, and translators make no distinction. See what a clarification it makes in Numbers 23:19: "God is not a [generic man], that He should lie; neither the son of [Adam], that He should repent ..." Here God is not a common man ('ish), a Gentile who can lie and suffer consequences, nor did God descend from Adam (bene 'adam) who must be restored through repentance and blood sacrifice. Other verses where translators make no distinction and inserted "man" for either 'adam or 'ish include: Psa. 8:4, Psa. 49:1-2, Psa. 80:17, Isa. 2:9, Isa. 31:8, and Jer. 50:40.
 45. In the Sumerian poem, "Enki and Ninhursag" one of Enki's sick organs was his rib. A goddess was created for healing called *Nin-ti*, "the lady of the rib." But the Sumerian *ti* also means "make live," such that the "lady of the rib" through a play on words came to be identified as the "lady who makes live."
 46. The Sumerian King List names Enmerkar "the king of Unug, who built Unug."
 45. Some authors have sought by various devices to bring the published ages for the patriarchs down to what they consider to be normal human lifespans, however, the patriarchal ages given in Genesis in the LXX accord more closely with estimated archaeological dates for Eridu (4800 BC), the flood (2900 BC), and Abraham (2000-1800 BC). Necessarily long ages would be required to bridge the gaps between these dates.
 48. Richard James Fischer, *Historical Genesis from Adam to Abraham* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2008), 142-155.
 49. Hebrew *saphah* translated as "language."
 50. Hebrew *deshe'*, meaning "grass" or "vegetation." NIV translates "vegetation."
 51. Hebrew *asah*, translated "made" in the KJV. The word for create, *bara* in Hebrew, is not in the text, and the heavenly bodies, sun, moon and stars, should have been included 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 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."

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52. This would be too soon for literal birds or “fowls” 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” would fit.
 53. “Sky,” Hebrew *shamayim* would work here.
 54. “Whales” in the KJV are mammals and would be out of order here. “Great creatures of the sea” appears in the NIV.
 55. See note 50.
 56. “Birds” from the NIV or “flying creatures” would be appropriate here although “fowl” in the KJV certainly is not out of place.
 57. 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 becoming accountable to God and receiving grace.
 58. A map of this area shows water from the Euphrates was diverted down an old river bed to furnish fresh water to the cities of Eridu, Ubad and Ur.
 59. In the early cities, Eridu, Ubad and Ur, water was diverted from the Euphrates down an ancient river bed and dispersed to their fields via canals.
 60. The King James translators rendered “Cush” as “Ethiopia” due perhaps to the fact that *cush* in Hebrew means “black,” or they may have followed Josephus, however, Cush was Noah’s grandson, and the other lands named, Assyria and Havilah, are also named after grandsons. Cush was home to the Cushites or Kassites who initially lived in what is now western Iran, a province called Khuzistan to this day.
 61. From the NIV.
 62. God gave the name “Israel” to Jacob (Gen. 32:28). When Israel appears in the text during his lifetime it refers to the man specifically. After his death “Israel” refers to the nation, Exod. 14:30, for example. Those in the nation of Israel are called “Israelites” (Gen. 32:32). In the same vein when *’adam* appears in Genesis initially it is the man, Adam (Gen. 2:19). If translators had treated “Adam” the same as “Israel,” the word “Adamite” would have been used where it refers to his descendants. In Gen 1:27, God created Adam (*’adam*) in his image. Had the translators been consistent, in Genesis 6:7 God would have declared that he was going to destroy the Adamites (*’adam*) from the face of the land.
 63. Whether these are “mountains” or “hills” would be hard to judge without knowing the exact landing site, but the plural form of the noun precludes identity with any particular mountain or hill.
 64. Ancient Urartu, an area anywhere from east to north by northwest of the ark’s starting point in southern Mesopotamia, present-day Iraq.
 65. “Hills” is still the optimal translation here and in subsequent verses.
 66. After the flood terminated the Adamic race descendants proceeding from Shem are “Semites.”
 67. According to Scott Morschauer, royal power was derived from, and circumscribed by, divine fiat. “A king or pharaoh was an “image/instrument for a deity,” e.g. one who acted on behalf of, and by, the consent of the divine.” In Near East context, and per Gen. 1:27, we can infer that those in the covenant line of descent to include the Israelites were “in the image.” The idea that Gen 1:27 has applicability for generic mankind stems from translations that use “man” or “mankind” for the Hebrew word *’adam*.
 68. Hebrew *saphah*, meaning “lip,” and in 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.
 69. From the NIV. Hebrew *chemar*, meaning a thick petroleum substance such as pitch, asphalt, or bitumen.
 69. Although all Semites are also Adamites, *’adam* in the Hebrew text, this would be confusing as Genesis previously described the annihilation of the children of Adam in the flood. Genesis 11 only involves Semites.
 71. Corrected for grammar.
 72. Hebrew *saphah*, for lip, speech, language or in this case, conversation. The sense here is that God must put an end to this conversation or topic of conversation by confounding their speech.
 73. Hebrew *saphah* for “speech,” is preferable in this context.
 74. From the Septuagint and Luke 3:36.
 75. Alister McGrath’s *Christian Theology an Introduction* lists “tradition, reason, and religious experience” as primary aids to interpretation. Extra-biblical evidence is not mentioned.