

IN GOD'S IMAGE AND LIKENESS 2
ENOCH, NOAH, AND THE TOWER OF BABEL

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FIGURE G7-1. *The Evening of the Deluge*, ca. 1843
Joseph Mallord William Turner, 1775-1851

The London-born artist Joseph Mallord William Turner has become familiar to many Latter-day Saints through President Thomas S. Monson, who has used Turner's painting about sailors braving the waves to save a storm-threatened ship¹ as a metaphor for spiritual rescue.² The painting above likewise evokes the power of nature. "While Noah and his wife sleep in their tent, the biblical Flood begins. In a ... vortex of rain and moonlight, birds and beasts head toward the distant Ark. This is a preliminary version of a canvas shown in the 1843 Royal Academy. Now in London's Tate Gallery, the final work uses stronger color contrasts but is equally evocative and sketchy."³ "Pair to *Light and Color (Goethe's Theory)*, *The Morning after the Deluge - Moses writing the Book of Genesis*,"⁴ in these companion pictures Turner opposes cool and warm colors, and their contrasting emotional associations, as described by Goethe in his '*Farbenlehre*' (Theory of Colors). Turner has chosen the biblical Deluge as the vehicle for these ideas, returning to the Historical Sublime he had mastered in some of his earliest exhibition pictures. Originally painted and framed as octagons, this pair carries two of Turner's last and most inspired statements of the natural vortex, while the allusion to Goethe adds a gloss of recent science and theory to a lifetime's preoccupation with elemental forces."⁵

1 *Life-Boat and Manby Apparatus Going Off To A Stranded Vessel* (about 1831).

2 See, e.g., T. S. Monson, *To the Rescue*, May 2001. President Monson's own name for the painting was used as the title for his biography (H. S. Swinton, *To the Rescue*).

3 *Evening of the Deluge*.

4 See FIGURE G7-4, p. 256.

5 *Shade and Darkness*.

GENESIS 7

The Flood

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Overview

IN the narrative of the Flood we witness the unleashing of destructive powers as potent as those that effected Creation. A few terse words describe the results: “All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died ... and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.”¹ Leon R. Kass explains:²

God sends the Flood, a fitting response to the self-destructive conduct of the heroes. For the Flood, in restoring the watery chaos of the ultimate beginnings,³ merely completes the descent into chaos that anarchic and heroic men ... were bringing upon themselves entirely on their own. The text even makes the point linguistically: the word God uses for “destroy” — “I will destroy them with the earth”⁴ — is the same word translated “corrupt,” used to describe what man and animals were doing on their own — “all flesh had corrupted His way upon the earth.”⁵ The sympathetic and thoughtful reader understands that the Flood is necessary and fitting.

The Ark As a Mobile Sanctuary

In considering the role of Noah’s ark in the Flood story, note that the Ark was specifically a *mobile* sanctuary,⁶ as were the Tabernacle and the ark made of reeds that saved the baby Moses. Each of these structures can be described as a traveling vehicle of rescue designed to parallel God’s portable pavilion or chariot in function.

Scripture makes a clear distinction between the fixed heavenly temple and its portable counterparts. For example, in Psalm 18:11⁷ and D&C 121:1, the “pavilion”⁸ of “God’s hiding place” should not be equated with the fixed celestial “temple”⁹ to which the prayers of the oppressed ascend.¹⁰ Rather it is a representation of a movable “conveyance”¹¹ in which God,

1 Genesis 7:22-23.

2 L. R. Kass, *Wisdom*, p. 164.

3 Moses 2:2.

4 Genesis 6:13.

5 Moses 8:29.

6 See *Endnote G7-1*, p. 272.

7 Cf. 2 Samuel 22: 12.

8 I.e., booth or canopy; Hebrew *sukkah*.

9 I.e., palace; Hebrew *hekal*.

10 2 Samuel 22:7; Psalm 18:6; D&C 121:2. J. F. McConkie *et al.*, *Revelations*, p. 945 mistakenly identifies the “pavilion” of D&C 121:1 as God’s heavenly residence, whereas S. E. Robinson *et al.*, *D&C Commentary*, 4:151 correctly identifies the “pavilion” as a “movable tent.”

11 See *Endnote G7-2*, p. 272.



**FIGURE G7-2. *The Fall of the Rebel Angels* (detail), 1500-1504
Hieronymus Bosch, ca. 1450-1516**

Bosch painted *The Fall of the Rebel Angels* on the obverse of the left wing of his Rotterdam panels. Although his other depictions of fallen angels are paired with scenes of the Garden of Eden, the right wing of this work shows Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat. (The middle panel is missing.) This context makes it clear that the painting concerns the fallen "sons of God" described in Genesis 6:1-4. The panel shows a "distinctive image of a hellish earth, with glowing skies above burning buildings at the horizon. Demonic figures hover in the sky and infest the landscape, though no angel antagonists show any battle. Two obscure figures stand in the opening to a dark cave, but their identities as an overdressed female and a crippled male do not distinguish them clearly from the cast of devils depicted elsewhere by Bosch."¹

"To Bosch's contemporaries, the melancholy spectacle of sin and folly could be explained only in terms of the Devil and his followers seeking to drag mankind into perdition. Against such overwhelming odds, what chance did the pilgrim have to reach his homeland? The answer of the medieval Church may be summed up in the title of Thomas à Kempis' book, the *Imitation of Christ*. By renouncing the world and following the examples set by Christ and His Saints, the pilgrim could hope to pass through the dark night of this world into Paradise. And although Bosch painted many pictures mirroring the tragic condition of humanity, he produced almost as many others which illuminated this path to salvation."²

1 L. Silver, Jheronimus Bosch.

2 W. S. Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, p. 108.

figuratively speaking, could swiftly descend to deliver His people from mortal danger.¹² The sense of the action is succinctly captured by Robert Alter:¹³ "The outcry of the beleaguered warrior ascends all the way to the highest heavens, thus launching a downward vertical movement" of God's own chariot.

Such a "downward vertical movement" had been a response to the sorry state of humanity not long before the Flood. In a vision foreshadowing this event, Enoch is said to have seen "many stars descend" from heaven.¹⁴ These were the Watchers or "sons of God"¹⁵ — identified with fallen angels in *1 Enoch* or with fallen mortal priests by early Christians and in the book of Moses.¹⁶ They were given a charge to reform mankind,¹⁷ a commission to "teach the sons of man, and perform judgment and uprightness upon the earth."¹⁸ Tragically, however, they "corrupted their way and their ordinances," the discharge of their missions thus serving to accelerate rather than halt the increase of "injustice ... upon the earth."¹⁹ It was in view of the utter failure of attempts to save humanity at large that God resolved to rescue Noah and his family.

12 K. L. Barker, *Zondervan*, p. 803 n. 18:7-15. See *Endnote G7-3*, p. 272.

13 R. Alter, *Psalms*, p. 53 n. 8.

14 G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 86:3, p. 364.

15 See *OVERVIEW Moses 8*, pp. 201, 203 for a different interpretation of the term "sons of God" as found in the book of Moses.

16 See *OVERVIEW Moses 8*, pp. 201, 203. Note that some scholars of *1 Enoch* see its story of the Watchers as being a thinly veiled polemic against contemporary temple priests.

17 J. L. Kugel, *Traditions*, pp. 179-185, 194-216; H. Schwartz, *Tree*, pp. 457-458. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 585-590.

18 O. S. Wintermute, *Jubilees*, 4:15, p. 62. J. C. VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 4:15, p. 25: "teach mankind and to do what is just and upright upon the earth." P. S. Alexander, *From Second Adam*, p. 98 regards the idea that the Watchers were "wicked from the start" as a "later reworking of the story" preserved in *Jubilees*.

19 *Ibid.*, 5:2, p. 62.



FIGURE G7-3. *The Revenge of Nauplius*, Gallery of Francis I, Fontainebleau, 1522-1540
Giovanni Battista di Jacopo (Le Rosso), 1494-1540 and Francesco Primaticcio (Primatice), 1504-1570

The fresco depicts Ajax who, “returning from the Trojan war, falls into an ambush. Nauplius, to avenge the death of his son, lit a flame on the reefs. The Greek ships, thinking that they were entering the port, plunged into the rocks, and the men drowned or were beaten down with oars.”¹ For his crime in violating her temple, “Athena caused Ajax to be struck by lightning and his dead body thrown on the rocks. (left).”² The gruesome fate of the drowning victims by a combination of divine action and human cruelty evokes the violent deaths of the wicked in the Flood.

- 1 Y. Jestaz, *La galerie François*, p. 13. The central boatman with the oar is strongly reminiscent of Michelangelo’s depiction of Charon in a like posture in the Last Judgment scene of his Sistine Chapel frescoes. Thanks to Olivier Blaise for this observation.
- 2 J-P Samoyault, *Guide*, p. 92. For an extended discussion, see D. Panofsky *et al.*, *Étude*, pp. 44-48.

Noah’s mission was one that few of us would envy. As Nibley imagines it:

If we fancy Noah riding the sunny seas high, dry, and snug in the Ark, we have not read the record — the long, hopeless struggle against entrenched mass resistance to his preaching, the deepening gloom and desperation of the years leading up to the final debacle, then the unleashed forces of nature, with the family absolutely terrified, weeping and praying “because they were at the gates of death”²⁰ as the Ark was thrown about with the greatest violence by terrible winds and titanic seas. Albright’s suggestion that the flood story goes back to “the tremendous floods which must have accompanied the successive retreats of the glaciers”²¹ is supported by the tradition that the family suffered terribly because of the cold and that Noah on the waters “coughed blood on account of the cold.”²² The Jaredites had only to pass through the tail end of the vast storm cycle of Noah’s day, yet for 344 days they had to cope with “mountain waves” and a wind that “did never cease to blow.”²³ Finally, Noah went forth into a world of utter desolation, as Adam did, to build his altar, call upon God, and try to make a go of it all over again, only to see some of his progeny on short order prefer Satan to God and lose all the rewards that his toil and sufferings had put in their reach.

20 M. J. bin Gorion (Berdichevsky), *Die Sagen*, p. 146: *Auch Noah und seine Söhne schrien und weinten in ihrer Angst und hatten grosse Furcht, denn sie waren der Pforte des Todes nahe* [Noah and his sons cried and wept in anxiety and had great fear, for they were near the gate of death].

21 W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods*, p. 99.

22 H. Freedman *et al.*, *Midrash*, 32:11, 1:256. Cf. J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah* 1, 32:10:5, p. 338.

23 Ether 6:6, 8.



FIGURE G7-4. *Light and Color (Goethe's Theory): The Morning After the Deluge - Moses Writing the Book of Genesis*, 1843

Joseph Mallord William Turner, 1775-1851

Turner has been called “the most versatile, successful, and controversial landscape painter of nineteenth-century England. Demonstrating mastery of watercolor, oil painting, and etching, his voluminous output ranges from depictions of local topography to atmospheric renderings of fearsome storms and awe-inspiring terrain. Though profoundly influenced by landscapists and history painters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Turner was an innovator who has been hailed as a forerunner of modernist abstraction.”¹

“In the title of this painting, Turner references the optical experiments of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, whose writings include a study of after-images, the colored spots produced in the eye by staring directly at the sun.”² The figure of a seated Moses can be seen just above the center of the painting.

“While critics accused Turner of extravagance and exaggeration [in his later work], outdoing each other with comparisons of his pictures to lobster salad, soapsuds and whitewash, beetroot or mustard, [John] Ruskin rooted his

analysis (at least at first) in Turner’s truth to nature. He became the standard-bearer of a new generation of Turner admirers, now usually professional, middle class or newly rich, who embraced his work for its modernity.”³

- 1 Joseph Mallord William Turner.
- 2 P. Pfeiffer, Sun.
- 3 Joseph Mallord William Turner.

“Upon the Face of the Waters”

Despite its ungainly shape as a buoyant temple, the Ark is portrayed as floating confidently above the chaos of the great deep. Significantly, the motion of the Ark “upon the face of the waters”²⁴ paralleled the movement of the Spirit of God “upon the face of the waters”²⁵ at the original creation of heaven and earth. The deliberate nature of this parallel is made apparent when we consider that these are the only verses in the Bible that contain the phrase “the face of the waters.” The recurrence of this phrase in the story of the Flood tells us that the presence of the Ark symbolized a return of the same Spirit of God that hovered over the waters at Creation — the Spirit whose previous withdrawal was presaged in Genesis 6:3.²⁶ “Where [that Spirit] is withdrawn, chaos flourishes unchecked.” “Where it hovers, there is order, and chaos is restrained.”²⁷

The keys to understanding the symbolism of the movement of Noah’s ark on the water are found in the creation story. In Moses 2:2, God says: “I caused darkness to come up upon the face of the deep.”²⁸ Unlike Genesis 1:2 where the origin of the darkness is left obscure, Joseph Smith’s translation of the verse tells us that God purposefully introduced the darkness. A corresponding statement in the book of Abraham asserts that the “darkness *reigned* upon the face of the deep,”²⁹ recalling ancient creation accounts that portray darkness not merely as the absence of light but as an active entity in its own right.³⁰

24 Genesis 7:18.

25 Genesis 1:2. See *Endnote G7-4*, p. 272.

26 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 267. Several Jewish sources describe the similar process of the removal of the *Shekhinah*—representing God’s presence — in various stages and its return at the dedication of the Tabernacle. See, e.g., H. Schwartz, *Tree*, p. 51, 55-56. See also D. J. Larsen, *Enoch and the City of Zion*.

27 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 267.

28 See *Endnote G7-5*, p. 272.

29 Abraham 4:2.

30 Cf. Isaiah 45:7 and N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 6.



FIGURE G7-5. Stone Chariot, Vitthala Temple Complex, Hampi, Karnataka, India
 Kanad Sanyal, 1959-

Originally built in the first half of the 15th century, the Vitthala temple is named for one of the aspects of the lord Vishnu, worshipped locally as the cult deity of the cattle herds.

Since the stone temple chariot represents the vehicle of lord Vishnu, it is not surprising to find it “parked” in front of his temple. Originally it functioned as a shrine containing a statue of Garuda (the eagle god):¹

[The] base platform is carved with mythical battle scenes. Though the chariot is not resting on it, the four giant wheels attached mimic the real life ones complete with the axis shafts and the brakes. A series of concentric floral motifs decorate the wheels. It appears from the marks on the platform, where the wheels rest, the wheels were free to move around the axis. In front of the chariot two elephants are positioned as if they are pulling the chariot.

In fact these elephants were brought from elsewhere and positioned here at a later stage. Originally two horses were carved in that position. The tails and the rear legs of the horses can be still seen just behind these elephant sculptures. A broken stone ladder once gave access to the sanctum is kept between the elephants. You can still spot the marks on the floor and the doorsill where once the ladder stood.

A nineteenth-century photograph attests that there was once a dome like superstructure over the chariot.²

1 Vitalla Temple.

2 On the symbolism of a square chariot with a round superstructure in Huang-Lao cosmography, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, ENDNOTE E-53, p. 717 and ENDNOTE E-206, p. 755.

Far from representing the stirring of evil and opposition, as one may suppose initially, the darkness upon the waters of creation was meant to represent a vital manifestation of God’s goodness. Indeed, Nicolas Wyatt’s careful analysis of Genesis 1:2 concludes that the element of darkness was nothing less than a description of “the veil for the divine glory”³¹ surrounding the Lord as He descended from heaven to earth to begin the work of Creation.³² This is the same imagery we encounter in Psalm 18, where God is portrayed as riding on the cherub throne of His chariot³³ with “darkness under his feet”³⁴ and “his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.”³⁵ Just as “darkness was upon the face of the deep”³⁶ when God descended in the moment immediately preceding the Creation, so darkness surrounded the glorious Ark as Noah moved over the waters in a prelude to the remaking of the world.³⁷ Nibley notes that in such accounts, where torrential waters and thick darkness above and beneath occlude the horizon, “the distinction between earth-travel and sky-travel often disappears.”³⁸

31 N. Wyatt, *Darkness*, p. 96.

32 M. Barker, *Gate*, p. 120. Among the sources cited by Barker in defense of this conclusion are such widespread themes as Philo’s idea of the Logos as the “shadow of God” (Philo, *Interpretation 3*, 3, 96, p. 61) and a version of the creation story that passed through the hands of the Gnostics (R. A. Bullard *et al.*, *Archons*, 95, p. 168).

33 Psalm 18:10.

34 Psalm 18:9. Cf. Exodus 24:15-18.

35 Psalm 18:11. Cf. the wording of the rescue scene in Psalm 18:16: “he drew me out of many waters.”

36 Genesis 1:2.

37 See *Endnote G7-6*, p. 272.

38 H. W. Nibley, *Tenting*, p. 41. Cf. W. Shakespeare, *Winter’s Tale*, 3:3:84-86: “I am not to say it is a sea, for it is now the sky, betwixt the firmament and it you cannot thrust a bodkin’s point.” See *Endnote G7-7*, p. 273.



FIGURE G7-6. *The Ark as a Mini-Replica of Creation*

Here we see the Ark represented as the nucleus of a new world moving “upon the face of the waters.”

In his thought-provoking essay, *Treasures in the Heavens*,¹ Hugh W. Nibley draws on Mandaeen and Gnostic sources to describe the creation of new worlds through a “colonizing process called ‘planting.’” “[T]hose spirits that bring their treasures to a new world are called ‘Plants,’ more rarely ‘seeds,’ of their father or ‘Planter’ in another world.² Every planting goes out from a Treasure House, either as the essential material elements or as the colonizers themselves, who come from a sort of mustering-area called the ‘Treasure-house of Souls.’”

1 H. W. Nibley, *Treasures*.

2 Cf. Adam’s “planting” (E. S. Drower, *Prayerbook*, pp. 283, 286, 290).

In the story of the Ark’s motions upon the waters, however, we are witnessing something graver than a blurring of the distinction between earth-travel and sky-travel. Rather, we can understand that, figuratively speaking, the very sky has fallen. As a consequence the “habitable and culture-orientated world lying between the heavens above and the underworld below, and separating them”³⁹ has vanished.⁴⁰ In the words of *1 Enoch*, “heaven ... fell down upon the earth. And when it fell upon the earth, ... the earth was swallowed up in the great abyss.”⁴¹ After that violent crash, what remained was a jumbled, watery confusion — with one exception: The motion of the Ark “upon the face of the waters,”⁴² like the Spirit of God “upon the face of the waters”⁴³ at Creation, was a portent of the appearance of light and life. Within the Ark, a “mini-replica of Creation,”⁴⁴ were the last vestiges of the original Creation, “an alternative earth for all living creatures,”⁴⁵ “a colony of heaven”⁴⁶ containing seedlings for a second Garden of Eden,⁴⁷ the nucleus of a new world. All these were hidden within a vessel of rescue described in scripture, like the Tabernacle, as a likeness of God’s own traveling pavilion.

39 N. Wyatt, *Darkness*, p. 93.

40 Cf. 2 Peter 3:6: “... the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.”

41 G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 83:3-4, p. 345. Compare with Nickelsburg’s paraphrase of this reversion to “primordial chaos”: “Heaven’s canopy — stretched out at creation to separate the waters above from the deep — is torn off and hurled onto the earth, which collapses and sinks back into the abyss” (*ibid.*, p. 349 n. 3-4).

42 Genesis 7:18.

43 Genesis 1:2.

44 E. A. Harper, *You Shall Make*, p. 54. Cf. L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, pp. 151-154. Morales argues that the “building and filling of the Ark ... exhibit a correspondence with the ‘building’ and filling of the cosmos” at the time of Creation (*ibid.*, p. 152).

45 E. A. Harper, *You Shall Make*, p. 54.

46 L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 154.

47 Cf. H. W. Nibley, *Treasures*, p. 185.

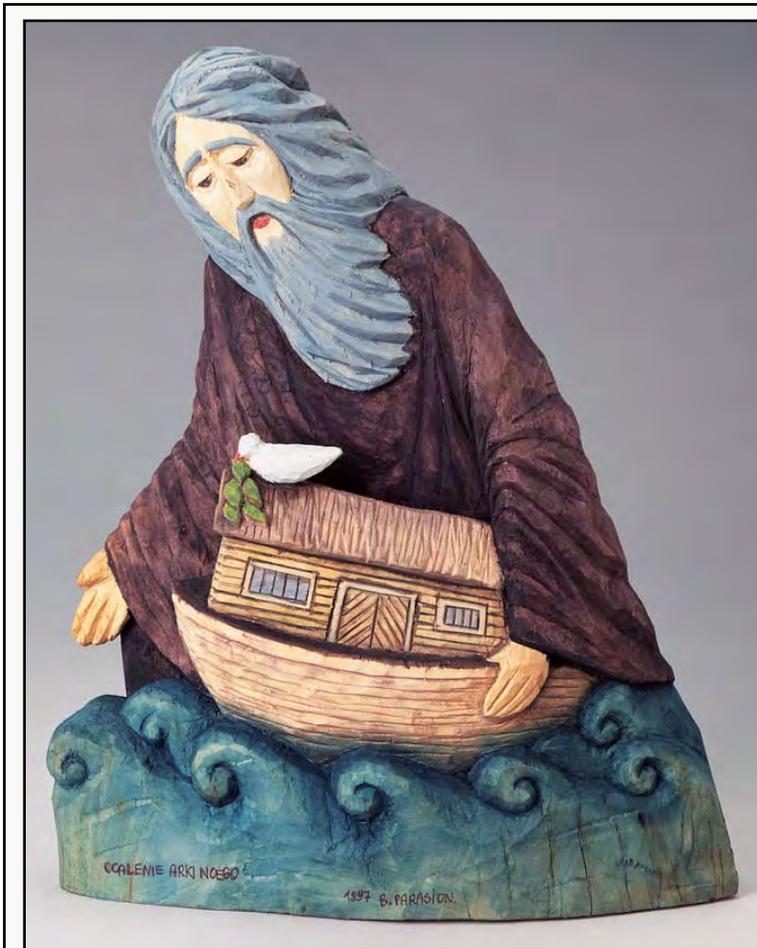


FIGURE G7-7. Noah's Ark
Boleslaw Parasion, 1950-

This sculpture is drawn from former LDS mission president Walter Whipple's large collection of Polish folk art. It "depicts a thoughtful God guiding the Ark with his hands."¹ Although the Bible does not mention explicitly God's role during the Flood, the scene shown here is described in *1 Enoch* 67:2: "I will put my hand upon [the Ark] and protect it."² George Nickelsburg conjectures that "God's placing a protective hand on the Ark corresponds either to Genesis 7:16 ("and YHWH shut him in"), or to the covering of the Ark mentioned in Genesis 6:16; 8:13, or both."³ However, a better parallel is found in the book of Moses: "Enoch saw that Noah built an ark; and that the Lord smiled upon it, and held it in his own hand."⁴

- 1 D. R. Dant, *Polish*, p. 91.
- 2 G. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 67:2, p. 273.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 288 n. 2a-c.
- 4 Moses 7:43.

Just as the Spirit of God patiently brooded⁴⁸ over the great deep at Creation, and just as "the longsuffering of God waited... while the ark was a preparing," so the indefatigable Noah endured the long brooding of the Ark over the slowly receding waters of the Deluge.⁴⁹

Car tout ce qui vivait sur terre fut détruit.
L'arche close flottait sur cet océan morne;
Au hasard, elle allait vers l'horizon sans borne,
Au milieu de l'horreur d'une éternelle nuit.⁵⁰

48 See *Endnote G7-9*, p. 273.

49 See *Endnote G7-8*, p. 273.

50 Saint-Saëns, *Le Déluge*, 2:

For all that once lived had now perished in fright.
Safely the Ark on bleak sea did careen;
To and fro drifting toward horizon unseen,
Amid the dark horror of eternal night.

See S. D. Long, *Wicked Hearts* for an exploration of the reception of the Flood narrative in music in Saint-Saëns's masterpiece and in Donizetti's *Il diluvio universale*.

Genesis 7: Text and Commentary

<p style="text-align: center;">CHAPTER 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>NOAH COMMANDED (PP. 261-263)</i></p> <p>AND ^athe Lord said unto Noah, ^bCome thou and all thy house into the ark; for ^{c,d}thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.</p> <p>2 Of every clean beast ^athou shalt take to thee by sevens, ^bthe male and his female: and of beasts that are ^cnot clean by two, the male and his female.</p> <p>3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; ^ato keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.</p> <p>4 ^aFor yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth ^bforty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.</p> <p>5 And ^aNoah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him.</p> <p>6 And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>NOAH ENTERS THE ARK (P. 263)</i></p> <p>7 ¶ 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.</p> <p>8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the</p>	<p>earth,</p> <p>9 There ^awent in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.</p> <p>10 And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>THE FLOOD BEGINS (PP. 263-264)</i></p> <p>11 ¶ ^aIn the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the ^bfountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.</p> <p>12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.</p> <p>13 ^aIn 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;</p> <p>14 ^aThey, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, ^bevery bird of every sort.</p> <p>15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.</p> <p>16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and ^athe Lord shut him in.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>THE WATERS PREVAIL AND ALL LIFE PERISHES (PP. 264-266)</i></p> <p>17 And ^athe flood was forty days upon the earth; and ^bthe waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.</p> <p>18 And ^athe waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark ^bwent upon the face of the waters.</p> <p>19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and ^aall the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.</p> <p>20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.</p> <p>21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and ^aevery man:</p> <p>22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.</p> <p>23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and ^athey were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.</p> <p>24 And ^athe waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.</p>
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1 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.

- 1 a **the Lord said.** The account of the Flood alternates between the use of “Lord” (Hebrew *Yahweh*) and “God” (Hebrew *’elohim*) in referring to Deity. Most modern scholars see this (along with other textual features such as repetition and verbal parallelism) as evidence for the use of two primary sources (designated *J* for *Jahwist* and *P* for *Priestly*) in the composition of the biblical story of the Flood.¹ Other scholars, while not necessarily denying the likelihood of multiple sources behind the Genesis account, focus on the harmonious structure of the whole in the account as we have it today.² Westermann³ wisely observes:

When commentators exegete the flood narratives of *J* and *P* separately, as they generally do, there is danger that justice will not be done to the individual narrative form as it has come down to us. One cannot avoid the fact that *R*’s composite narrative has something important of its own to say, and that the scope of its effect belongs neither to *J* nor to *P* but to *R*.⁴

See COMMENTARY Moses 8 p. 278 for an overall perspective on the structure of the Flood story.

With respect to the use of the two divine names, rabbinical tradition, in an alternative explanation, associates “God” with the attribute of Justice and “Lord” with the attribute of Mercy.⁵ Approaching the problem in a more nuanced way, Cassuto⁶ has formulated a set of principles that he sees as governing the use of the generic (God) and specific (Lord) designations of Deity in Israel and the ancient Near East. In brief, “God” is used when referred to in His character as the source of life and creation, in abstract philosophical conceptions of the scholars, and with respect to His transcendental qualities; “Lord” is used when referring to Him as the source of law for the people of Israel, in the popular conceptions of the people, and with respect to His personal character and direct relationship to people and nature.⁷ “Sometimes, of course,” Cassuto admits, “it happens that two opposite rules apply together and come in conflict with each other; then, as logic demands, the rule that is more prevalent to the primary purport of the relevant passage prevails.”⁸

- b **Come thou and all thy house into the ark.** This commandment was anticipated in Genesis 6:18. The corresponding command for disembarkation is found in Genesis 8:16.
- c **thee have I seen righteous before me.** Wenham⁹ sees this phrase as the end of a “long-range chiasmus” between Genesis 6:9, 11 and 6:12, 7:1:

6:9	Noah was righteous ... among his contemporaries
6:11	The earth was ruined
6:12	God saw the earth was ruined
7:1	The Lord said ... “you have I seen are righteous in this generation”

- d **thee.** This is given as “thee only” in JST OT2.¹⁰

1 E.g., C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, pp. 395-406, 424-425, 427-431, 434-436. See J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 133-134 for a brief discussion of similar issues in the story of Creation.

2 E.g., U. Cassuto, *Documentary*; V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, pp. 285ff; I. M. Kikawada et al., *Before Abraham*; L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, pp. 121-192; J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, pp. 86-87; G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, pp. 167-169.

3 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 431.

4 See *Endnote G7-10*, p. 274.

5 R. M. Zlotowitz et al., *Bereishis*, 1:239-240.

6 U. Cassuto, *Documentary*, pp. 15-41; U. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, pp. 85-88; U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, pp. 35-36.

7 U. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, p. 87. V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 286 asserts that “Lord” also occurs in passages where Deity is thematic.

8 U. Cassuto, *Documentary*, p. 32.

9 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 176.

10 S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, p. 626.

2 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.

3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; **to keep seed alive** upon the face of all the earth.

4 **For yet seven days,** and I will cause it to rain upon the earth **forty days and forty nights;** and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.

5 **And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him.**

- 2 a **thou shalt take to thee by sevens.** Earlier Noah had been told to take pairs of animals aboard, with no reference to clean or not clean.¹¹ Hamilton sees this verse as part of a “final and more detailed set of instructions” rather than an inconsistency caused by the awkward integration of the *J* and *P* sources: “The contradiction disappears ... if we read *shenayim* in 6:19-20 as a collective for ‘pairs’; one cannot form a plural of a word that is dual. Thus Genesis 6:19-20 is the general statement. Noah is to bring aboard pairs of animals. Specifically the animal population is to consist of seven pairs of clean and one pair of unclean.”¹² This is in order that Noah later may be able to offer sacrifice of the clean animals.¹³ “Again it is the centrality of the idea of a covenant relationship that lies behind the author’s work.”¹⁴
- b **the male and his female.** Literally, “man and his wife.” “The two nouns *ish* (man), and *ishah* (woman, wife), originally designated male and female of human beings, but were later applied to the male and female of animals as well.”¹⁵
- c **not clean.** Jewish exegetes stress the fact that God said “not clean” rather than uttering the odious term for “unclean.” For example, R. Yudan commented: “We find that the Holy One, blessed be He, used a circumlocution of three words so as not to make use of the word ‘unclean’ with His own mouth.”¹⁶
- 3 a **to keep seed alive.** The Hebrew term for seed “means both semen and the offspring that is its product. It is a very concrete way of conceiving propagation and the survival of a line.”¹⁷
- 4 a **For yet seven days.** Jewish tradition holds that the Flood was postponed by God to allow a proper mourning period for Methuselah’s recent death.¹⁸ The superfluous term “yet” was explained by the idea that there would be “an additional grace period of several days beyond the original period which God allotted in the hope that [the wicked] would repent.”¹⁹ There was to be no question that the Lord had given ample time for any who wished to be saved.
- b **forty days and forty nights.** Rashi equated this time period to the amount of time it took for a fetus to be formed after conception, stating that Noah’s wicked generation had “behaved depravedly by troubling their Fashioner to fashion the forms of fetuses of *mamzerim* [i.e., children born of an incestuous or adulterous relationship].”²⁰
- 5 a **Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him.** Wenham²¹ summarizes verses 5-16 as a “narrative that relates the complete and total obedience of Noah and the animals

11 Genesis 6:19-20.

12 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 287.

13 J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 85; R. M. Zlotowitz *et al.*, *Bereishis*, 1:242-243.

14 J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 85.

15 Rambam, *Moreh* 1:6, cited in R. M. Zlotowitz *et al.*, *Bereishis*, 1:243.

16 J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah* 1, 32:4:1, p. 332.

17 R. Alter, *Five Books*, p. 43 n. 3.

18 Rashi, *Genesis Commentary*, 1:73 n. 7:4; R. M. Zlotowitz *et al.*, *Bereishis*, 1:244.

19 *Ibid.*, 1:244.

20 Rashi, *Genesis Commentary*, 1:73-74 n. 7:4.

21 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 177.

5 *And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him.*

6 *And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.*

7 *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.*

8 *Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,*

9 *There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.*

10 *And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.*

11 *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 deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.*

12 *And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.*

to God's command to enter the Ark and the onset of the Flood. The fulness of description, the use of epic apposition, and repeated mentions of the date give this scene weight and solemnity. The day when the old creation died is described with a gravity befitting the occasion. The threefold refrain 'as God (the Lord) had commanded him' emphasizes the other central fact: Noah's fidelity to God led to his salvation."

6 a **Noah was six hundred years old.** Hamilton²² comments: "That Noah was six hundred years old when the Flood began tells us that his sons, or at least one of them, would be one hundred years old.²³ Apparently Noah fathered no additional children after the Flood, although he still had about one third of his life left.²⁴ In the post-Flood covenant Noah receives abundant promises from God, but more progeny is not among those promises."

9 a **went in two and two.** "Ramban's view is that only two of each species came by themselves. Noah had to bring the other six pairs of the clean species."²⁵

11 a **In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month.** Opinion is divided as to whether the New Year fell in the spring or the fall.²⁶ Scholars have encountered difficult chronological issues in the Flood story.²⁷

b **fountains of the great deep ... windows of heaven.** Consistent with ancient conceptions of cosmology,²⁸ the waters of the Flood were seen as originating both from above and below.

broken up. Literally, "split" (Hebrew *baqa*). By way of contrast to *Enuma Elish*,²⁹ where *order* is created by bisecting Ti'amat, the Bible account depicts the creation of *chaos* by the splitting of the great deep (*tehom rabba*). "In other words, the themes are reversed. Genesis 7:11 may be cited, then, as a confirming illustration of Yahweh's lordship over the waters. They are His to release or to control."³⁰

22 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 288.

23 See Genesis 5:32.

24 Genesis 9:28-29.

25 A. J. Rosenberg, *Mikraot*, p. 105 n. 7:9.

26 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 55.

27 See, e.g., U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 83; N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 376; G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, pp. 179-181; C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, pp. 432-433.

28 See, e.g., J. H. Walton, *Genesis*, pp. 12-13.

29 S. Dalley, *Epic*, 4, pp. 253-255.

30 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 293. See Psalm 74:15 and Isaiah 51:10.

13 **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;

14 **They, and every beast** after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, **every bird of every sort**.

15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.

16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and **the Lord shut him in**.

17 And **the flood was forty days upon the earth**; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

- 13 a **In the selfsame day.** Wenham³¹ translates this phrase as “On this very day” and notes that this “fairly rare phrase” is “used to stress the memorableness of a particular occasion, e.g., Abraham’s circumcision,³² the Exodus,³³ Moses’ death.”³⁴ He also notes that the repetition of the entry into the Ark, here with additional details, gives “the whole occasion ‘a festive tone’³⁵ as befits an act which marks one of the turning points of human history”:

Noah’s great act of obedience not merely saved himself but made possible the new world order, whose safety would be guaranteed by covenant. These verses thus portray the founders of the new humanity and new animal kingdom processing in a double column into the Ark. As each group embarks, its name is called and recorded for posterity.

The entry by pairs emphasizes the orderly nature of the male-female relationships of this chosen group in contrast to the depravity of the men and women of Noah’s generation.

- 14 a **They, and every beast.** Verses 14 and 15 are omitted in their entirety in JST OT1.³⁶
- b **every bird of every sort.** Literally, “birds of every type of wing.”³⁷ This seemingly superfluous detail was added, according to Rashi, so as to make sure grasshoppers were included.³⁸ No creature was to be forgotten.
- 16 a **the Lord shut him in.** In *Gilgamesh* and *Atrahasis*, it is the flood hero who shuts his own door.³⁹ By way of contrast, the biblical phrase points to “the divine director behind the operation.”⁴⁰
- 17 a **the flood was forty days upon the earth.** This phrase describes the first heavy phase of the deluge. “The absence of any personal names [in the verses that follow] apart from a parenthetical mention of Noah in v. 23, enhances the atmosphere of desolation.”⁴¹ The slowing of the pace in these verses “marks the climax of a narrative.”⁴²

31 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 181. Cf. C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, pp. 436-437.

32 Genesis 17:23, 26.

33 Exodus 12:41, 51.

34 Deuteronomy 32:48.

35 Indeed, Westerman asserts that the phrase “On this very day” specifically “seems to refer to a day of remembrance or a feast day” (C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 436).

36 S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, p. 113.

37 A. J. Rosenberg, *Mikraot*, pp. 105-106 n. 7:14.

38 Rashi, *Genesis Commentary*, 1:76 n. 7:14. See U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, pp. 90-91 for an opposing view.

39 S. Dalley, *Atrahasis*, 3:2, p. 31; A. George, *Gilgamesh*, 11:94, p. 91.

40 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 182.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 182.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 183.

17 And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and **the waters increased**, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

18 And **the waters prevailed**, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and **all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered**.

- b **the waters increased.** Literally, “the waters multiplied.” Wenham⁴³ calls this phrase “a baleful echo of the injunction given to the first creatures to be fruitful and multiply.”⁴⁴ As if to reinforce this echo, the word appears again in v. 18.”
- 18 a **the waters prevailed.** “A stage further. The waters do not merely multiply greatly; they triumph.”⁴⁵
- b **went upon the face of the waters.** Sarna translates this as “drifted upon the waters.”⁴⁶ The biblical account makes it clear that the Ark “was not shaped like a ship and it had no oars,” “accentuating the fact that Noah’s deliverance was not dependent on navigating skills, [but rather happened] entirely by God’s will,”⁴⁷ its movement solely determined by “the thrust of the water and wind.”⁴⁸

Significantly, the motion of the Ark “upon the face of the waters”⁴⁹ paralleled the movement of the Spirit of God “upon the face of the waters”⁵⁰ at the original creation of heaven and earth. The deliberate nature of this parallel is made clear when we consider that these are the only two verses in the Bible that contain the phrase “the face of the waters.” In short, the recurrence of this phrase in the story of the Flood tells us that the presence of the Ark symbolized a return of the same Spirit of God that hovered over the waters at Creation — the Spirit whose previous withdrawal was presaged in Genesis 6:3. “Where [that Spirit] is withdrawn, chaos flourishes unchecked.” “Where it hovers, there is order, and chaos is restrained.”⁵¹

- 19 a **all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.** Bradley⁵² explains:

The fundamental question is whether the Noachian flood was global or local. The terminology used in Genesis 6-9 seems to favor a global flood... [However, t]he use of such biblical language in other stories may help us to understand the intention here. In Genesis 41:56, we are told, “The famine was spread over all the face of the earth.” We normally interpret this famine as devastating the lands of the ancient Near East around Egypt and do not assume that American Indians and Australian Aborigines came to buy grain from Joseph. 1 Kings 10:24 states that “the whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.” Surely Inca Indians from South America or Maoris from New Zealand had not heard of Solomon and sought his audience.

The Hebrew word *eretz* used in Genesis 7:19 is usually translated “earth” or “world” but does not generally refer to the entire planet. Depending on the context, it is often translated “country” or ‘land’ to make this clear. References to the entire planet are found in Genesis 1:1; 2:1; and 14:22, for example. However, more typical references might be Genesis 1:10; 2:11; or 2:13, where *eretz* is translated ‘land.’ In Genesis 12:1, Abram was told to leave his *eretz*. He was obviously not told to leave the planet but rather to leave his country... A final helpful comparison to obtain a proper interpretation of Genesis 7:19 involves Deuteronomy 2:25, which talks about all the nations “under the heavens” being fearful of the Israelites. Obviously, all nations “under the heavens” was not intended to mean all on planet Earth.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 182.
 44 Moses 2:22, 28.
 45 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 182.
 46 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 55.
 47 R. M. Zlotowitz *et al.*, *Bereishis*, p. 230. Cf. U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, pp. 60-61.
 48 *Ibid.*, p. 60.
 49 Genesis 7:18.
 50 Genesis 1:2.
 51 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 267.
 52 W. Bradley, *Why*, pp. 177-178.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and **every man**:

22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and **they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive**, and they that were with him in the ark.

24 And **the waters prevailed upon the earth** an hundred and fifty days.

- 21 a **every man**. Hamilton⁵³ observes: “In the preservation notice we were told first about the salvation of human beings, and then [about] that of the animals. In the death notice we are told first about the loss of animal life and then [about] the loss of human life. The Hebrew of v. 21 takes eight words to describe the loss of animal life, but only two words to describe the demise of human life.” “Thus the verse ends on a note, as it were, of bitter sorrow.”⁵⁴
- 23 a **they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive**. “Life did not simply die. It was wiped out. The threats of 6:7 and 7:15 were fulfilled. Only Noah and those with him in the Ark survived. The contrast between those wiped out *mhh* and Noah *nh* is deliberately highlighted by using the similar verb with the proper name.”⁵⁵ “The survivors do indeed represent a ray of hope for the future, but for the moment they are but a meager and woeful remnant.”⁵⁶
- 24 a **the waters prevailed upon the earth**. The chapter ends “with an awe-inspiring picture of the mighty waters covering the entire earth. We see water everywhere, as though the world had reverted to its primeval state at the dawn of Creation, when the waters of the deep submerged everything. Nothing remained of the teeming life that had burst forth upon the earth. Only a tiny point appears on the face of the terrible waters: the Ark that preserves between its planks the seeds of life for the future. But it is a mere atom and is almost lost in the endless expanse of water that was spread over the face of the whole earth. A melancholy scene that is liable to fill the reader with despair. What will happen to this atom of life?”⁵⁷

53 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 297.

54 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 95.

55 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 183.

56 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 97.

57 *Ibid.*

Gleanings

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Nahum M. Sarna: The Flood and Creation¹

The uncompromisingly moral tenor and didactic purpose of the Genesis Flood story have influenced its literary artistry. Because humanly wrought evil is perceived to be the undoing of God's creativity, numerous elements in the story are artful echoes of the Creation narrative. Thus the divine decision to wipe out the human race employs the same two verbs that are used in the original Creation, but transposed in order to symbolize the reversal of the process.² The Deluge itself is brought about by the release and virtual reuniting of the two halves of the primordial waters that had been separated in the beginning.³ The classification of animal life in 6:20 and 7:14 corresponds to that in 1:11-12, 21, 24-25. The provisioning of food in 6:21 depends upon 1:29-30. Noah is the first man to be born after the death of Adam, according to the chronology of 5:28-29, and he becomes a second Adam, the second father of humanity. Both personages beget three sons, one of whom turns out to be degenerate. Noah's ark is the matrix of a new creation, and, like Adam in the Garden of Eden, he lives in harmony with the animals. The role of the wind in sweeping back the flood waters recalls the wind from God in 1:2. The rhythm of nature established in 1:14 is suspended during the Flood and resumed thereafter, in 8:22. Finally, the wording of the divine blessing in 9:7 repeats that in 1:28, just as the genealogical lists of the Table of Nations in chapter 10 parallel those of 4:17-26 and 5:1-32 that follow the Creation story. In both cases the lineage of the human race is traced back to a common ancestry.

Morris S. Petersen: The Exact Nature of the Flood Is Not Known⁴

The Old Testament records a flood that was just over fifteen cubits (sometimes assumed to be about twenty-six feet) deep and covered the entire landscape: "And all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered."⁵ Scientifically this account leaves many questions unanswered, especially how a measurable depth could cover mountains. Elder John A. Widtsoe, writing in 1943, offered this perspective:⁶

The fact remains that the exact nature of the flood is not known. We set up assumptions, based upon our best knowledge, but can go no further. We should remember that when inspired

1 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, pp. 49-50.

2 Genesis 6:7. Cf. Genesis 1:26-27.

3 Genesis 7:11. Cf. Genesis 1:1, 6-7.

4 M. S. Petersen, *Earth*, 2:432.

5 Genesis 7:19.

6 J. A. Widtsoe, *Evidences*, p. 127.

writers deal with historical incidents they relate that which they have seen or that which may have been told them, unless indeed the past is opened to them by revelation.

The details in the story of the flood are undoubtedly drawn from the experiences of the writer. Under a downpour of rain, likened to the opening of the heavens, a destructive torrent twenty-six feet deep or deeper would easily be formed. The writer of Genesis made a faithful report of the facts known to him concerning the flood. In other localities the depth of the water might have been more or less. In fact, the details of the flood are not known to us.

B. Kent Harrison: We See No Evidence of a Worldwide Flood⁷

We see no evidence of a worldwide flood. In fact, we see overwhelming evidence that there was not such a (recent) event. Geologists know the geologic effects of flooding, as for example in the scablands in the state of Washington that resulted from the emptying of Lake Missoula. No such topography is seen on large scale. A possible explanation is that the Flood was a relatively local event.

Walter Bradley: Evidence for a Local Flood⁸

The fundamental question is whether the Noachian flood was global or local. The terminology used in Genesis 6-9 seems to favor a global flood... [However, t]he use of such biblical language in other stories may help us to understand the intention here. In Genesis 41:56, we are told, “The famine was spread over all the face of the earth.” We normally interpret this famine as devastating the lands of the ancient Near East around Egypt and do not assume that American Indians and Australian Aborigines came to buy grain from Joseph. 1 Kings 10:24 states that “the whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.” Surely Inca Indians from South America or Maoris from New Zealand had not heard of Solomon and sought his audience.

The Hebrew word *eretz* used in Genesis 7:19 is usually translated “earth” or “world” but does not generally refer to the entire planet. Depending on the context, it is often translated “country” or ‘land’ to make this clear. References to the entire planet are found in Genesis 1:1; 2:1; and 14:22, for example. However, more typical references might be Genesis 1:10; 2:11; or 2:13, where *eretz* is translated ‘land.’ In Genesis 12:1, Abram was told to leave his *eretz*. He was obviously not told to leave the planet but rather to leave his country... A final helpful comparison to obtain a proper interpretation of Genesis 7:19 involves Deuteronomy 2:25, which talks about all the nations “under the heavens” being fearful of the Israelites. Obviously, all nations “under the heavens” was not intended to mean all on planet Earth.

The Hebrew word translated “covered” in Genesis 7:19 is *kasah*. It can mean “residing upon,” “running over,” or “falling upon.” Twenty feet of water running over or falling upon the mountains (or hills) is quite different from that amount residing upon them, although either event could destroy human and animal life in its path...

If the entire Mesopotamian valley was flooded and the water receded slowly, then Noah might have seen only water, with distant mountain ranges being over the horizon. God’s use of wind in Genesis 8:1 to cause the flood to subside would be reasonable for a local flooding of this huge valley. It would not make sense for a flood that left water to a depth of thirty thousand feet, sufficient to cover Mount Everest. Genesis 8:4 indicates that the Ark came to

⁷ B. K. Harrison, *Truth*, p. 173.

⁸ W. Bradley, *Why*, pp. 177-179.

rest on the hills or mountains of Ararat, not specifically Mount Ararat, which is seventeen thousand feet tall. This complex mountain range extends north and east of Mount Ararat down to the foothills skirting the Mesopotamian plain. If the Ark had landed near the top of Mount Ararat, it is difficult to imagine how Noah and his family as well as the animals would have been able to descend to the base of the mountain, given the considerable difficulty mountain climbers have today attempting to reach the locations where the Ark is thought (I believe, incorrectly) to have landed.

Further evidence for a local flood is found in Genesis 8:5, where it is noted that the water receded until the tenth month when the tops of the mountains (or hills) became visible for the first time. The reference here seems to be what Noah could see, not the entire world. In Genesis 8:11, the dove returns with an olive leaf. Since olive trees don't grow at higher elevations, a flood that covered all the mountains would not give this type of evidence of receding.

One can estimate the total amount of water that would be needed to cover all the mountains on the face of the earth and compare this to the total water reserves that we know of on planet Earth, both in lakes and oceans and in subterranean aquifers. A flood that covered all the mountains on earth would require 4.5 times the total water resources that exist on planet Earth.

Hugh W. Nibley: Understanding the Flood From Noah's Perspective⁹

The Latter-day Saints have four basic [Creation] stories, those found in the Bible, the Book of Moses, the Book of Abraham, and the temple—each seen from a different angle, like the four Gospels but not conflicting if each is put into its proper context. And what is that context? One vitally important principle that everyone seems to have ignored until now is the consideration that everything is presented to us in these accounts through the eyes or from the point of view of, the individual observers who tell the story. Historians long ago came to realize that the boast of German *Geschichtswissenschaft*—to report what happened at all times “*wie es eigentlich geschah*,” the whole truth, the complete event in holistic perfection as it would be seen by God — is a philosopher's pipe dream ...

The Latter-day Saints, inheritors of the Christian version of this teaching, are constantly converting statements of limited application to universal or at least sweeping generalities. To illustrate, I was told as a child that the Rocky Mountains, the Appalachians, and the Andes all came into existence overnight during the great upheavals of nature that took place at the time of the Crucifixion—an absurdity that plays into the hands of critics of the Book of Mormon. But what we find in the 3 Nephi account when we read it carefully is a few sober, factual, eyewitness reports describing an earthquake of 8-plus on the Richter scale in a very limited area. Things that appear unlikely, impossible, or paradoxical from one point of view often make perfectly good sense from another. The *Nautical Almanac* gives the exact time of sunrise and sunset for every time of the year, yet astronauts know that the sun neither rises nor sets except from a particular point of view, the time of the event being strictly dependent on the exact location. From that point of view and that only, it is strictly correct and scientific to say that the sun does rise and set. Just so, the apparently strange and extravagant phenomena described in the scriptures are often correct descriptions of

⁹ H. W. Nibley, *Before Adam*, pp. 64-66. See D. E. Jeffery, *Noah's Flood* and C. M. White *et al.*, *Noachian Flood Story* for considered LDS perspectives on reconciling scientific findings with the Genesis flood story. See also M. S. Petersen, *Earth*, p. 432; J. A. Widtsoe, *Flood*.

what would have appeared to a person in a particular situation. You and I have never been in those situations. To describe what he sees to people who have never seen anything like it, the writer must reach for metaphors and similes: “His eyes were *as* a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white *like* the pure snow . . . his voice was *as* the sound of the rushing of great waters.”¹⁰ There was no fire, no snow, no rushing waters, but that is as near as Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon could come to telling us what they experienced when “the veil was taken from [their] minds, and the eyes of [their] understanding were opened!”¹¹ They were reporting as well as they could what they had seen from a vantage point on which we have never stood.

A recent study points out that the charge that Abraham’s story in the Bible must be fictitious because no one could know the highly intimate things reported there — nobody, Haming admits, unless it were Abraham himself. The earliest Abraham books are supposed to be autobiographies, and the story told from his point of view makes perfectly good sense. So with Noah in the ark. From where he was, “the whole earth”¹² was covered with water as far as he could see; after things had quieted down for 150 days and the Ark ground to a halt, it was still three months before he could see any mountain tops. But what were conditions in other parts of the world? If Noah knew that, he would not have sent forth messenger birds to explore. The flood as he described it is what he saw of it. “He sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground.”¹³ Couldn’t he see for himself? Not where the dove went. It was not until seven days later that he sent it out again; and after flying all day, the bird came back with a green leaf fetched from afar; “so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.”¹⁴ Still he waited another seven days. When the dove did not return, Noah had his answer. In some distant place, trees were bearing and there was birdfood to be found. But not where Noah was. All that time he had not dared to open up.

Note that the author does not fall into the literary trap of telling where the birds went and what they saw. That became a standard theme of early Oriental literature, faithfully reflected in the classical stories of the sea-eagle and the hoopoe. All Noah tells us is what he saw of the birds and the flood. The rain continued at least in spots, for there was that magnificent rainbow. Why do Christians insist on calling it the first rainbow, just because it is the first mentioned? Who says that water drops did not refract light until that day? Well, my old Sunday School teacher, for one, used to say it. The rainbow, like the sunrise, is strictly the product of a point of view, for which the beholder must stand in a particular place while it is raining in another particular place and the sun is in a third particular place, if he is to see it at all. It is a lesson in relativity.

Parley P. Pratt: Not a Spiritual But a Physical Flood¹⁵

It was well for Noah that he was not well-versed in the spiritualizing systems of modern divinity; for under their benighted influence he would never have believed that so marvelous a prophecy would have had a literal meaning and fulfillment. No, he would have been told that the Flood meant a spiritual flood, and the Ark a spiritual ark, and the moment he

10 D&C 110:3, emphasis added.

11 D&C 110:1.

12 Genesis 8:9.

13 Genesis 8:8.

14 Genesis 8:11.

15 P. P. Pratt, *Voice*, p. 4.

thought otherwise he would have been set down as a fanatic, knave, or fool. But it was so — that he believed the prophecy literally. Here then is a fair sample of foreknowledge, for all the world who did not possess it perished by the Flood.

Leon Kass: The Ark Is a Microcosm of the Projected New Earthly Order¹⁶

The Ark is a microcosm of the projected new earthly order. Afloat amidst the watery chaos, it bears male and female of every species of terrestrial and avian life, in order to begin again. The complete variety of living forms is represented: the new order preserves not only the phenomenon of life but also the many-splendored kinds that make an articulated world. In charge of preservation and order is the human animal, guardian of all animal life. Will he be willing and able to maintain order and to preserve life? We should not underestimate the obstacles to his doing so. For life as such always poses a danger to life, and the human animal threatens it most of all.

Hugh W. Nibley: Charity Toward All Creatures¹⁷

There is a tradition that Melchizedek, instructing Abraham in the things of the priesthood, explained to him that Noah earned his blessing by his charity to the animals, recalling how in the Ark, “We did not sleep because all night long we were setting food before this one and before that one.” Taking this lesson to heart, Abraham himself made a sort of Garden of Eden near Hebron, and there practiced charity toward all creatures that thus he might become “a possessor of heaven and earth.”¹⁸

William Blake: A Dog Starv'd At His Master's Gate¹⁹

A dog starv'd at his master's gate
 Predicts the ruin of the state.
 A horse misused upon the road
 Calls to heaven for human blood ...
 Kill not the moth nor butterfly,
 For the last judgment draweth nigh.

¹⁶ L. R. Kass, *Wisdom*, p. 169.

¹⁷ Nibley, *Dominion*, p. 9.

¹⁸ See Genesis 14:19, 22.

¹⁹ From W. Blake, *Auguries of Innocence*.

Endnotes

- G7-1** Recognizing that even the most ostensibly permanent temple complexes are best viewed only as way stations, Nibley generalized the concept of mobile sanctuaries to include all current earthly structures:¹

The most wonderful thing about Jerusalem the Holy City is its mobility: at one time it is taken up to heaven and at another it descends to earth or even makes a rendezvous with the earthly Jerusalem at some point in space halfway between. In this respect both the city and the temple are best thought of in terms of a tent, ... at least until the time comes when the saints "will no longer have to use a movable tent"² according to the early [Apostolic] Fathers, who get the idea from the New Testament ...³ It is now fairly certain, moreover, that the great temples of the ancients were not designed to be dwelling-houses of deity but rather stations or landing-places, fitted with inclined ramps, stairways, passageways, waiting-rooms, elaborate systems of gates, and so forth, for the convenience of traveling divinities, whose sacred boats and wagons stood ever ready to take them on their endless junkets from shrine to shrine and from festival to festival through the cosmic spaces. The Great Pyramid itself, we are now assured, is the symbol not of immovable stability but of constant migration and movement between the worlds; and the ziggurats of Mesopotamia, far from being immovable, are reproduced in the seven-stepped throne of the thundering sky-wagon.

- G7-2** Appropriately translated by Sparks *et al.* from the Greek as "Tabernacle."⁴ Eden surmises:⁵

No doubt the historical model closest to this is the *apadâna* of the Persian sovereign, the pavilion of the royal palace in which the King of kings sat in his throne to receive his subjects. In some texts of the Jewish tradition, the link which ties the description of the divine audience room to the earthly royal one is clearly shown. For instance, in the *Pirkei De Rebbe Eliezer*, an early medieval Midrash, we can read:⁶ "[God] let Adam into his *apadâna*, as it is written: 'And put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and to keep it.'"⁷

- G7-3** Some Christians also came to view this Psalm as foreshadowing the Incarnation.⁸ Noah's ark was sometimes seen in a similar fashion: "The Ark was a type of the Mother of God with Christ and the Church in her womb (*Akath*). The flood-waters were a type of baptism, in which we are saved."⁹

- G7-4** The singular rather than the plural term for "water" appears in JST OT2, the source of Moses 2:2.¹⁰ However, "waters" (Hebrew *mayim*) the original term in Genesis, is used in JST OT1 as well as in the later translation of the book of Abraham. This raises the possibility that the change in OT2 was made erroneously or on John Whitmer's initiative rather than the Prophet's.¹¹

- G7-5** Although Walton credited Joseph Smith's explicit use of the Hiphil-like term "caused" in the book of Abraham¹² to the influence of the Prophet's Hebrew teacher,¹³ Moses 2:2 provides a clear instance where a similar construction involving the same verb was explicitly added in the Joseph Smith Translation in 1830,¹⁴ five years before Hebrew study began in Kirtland.

- G7-6** Cf. M. Meyer, *Secret Book of John*, 29:135-136, p. 130:

1 H. W. Nibley, *Tenting*, pp. 42-43.

2 Origen, *John*, 10:23, p. 404. "The pitching of the tent outside the camp represents God's remoteness from the impure world" (H. W. Nibley, *Tenting*, p. 79 n. 40).

3 E.g., "John 1:14 reads literally, 'the logos was made flesh and pitched his tent [*eskenosen*] among us'; and after the Resurrection the Lord 'camps' with his disciples, Acts 1:4. At the Transfiguration Peter prematurely proposed setting up three tents for taking possession (Matthew 17:4; Mark 9:5; Luke 9:33)" (*ibid.*, p. 80 n. 41).

4 J. N. Sparks *et al.*, *Orthodox Study Bible*, Psalm 17 (18):12, p. 691.

5 G. B. Eden, *Mystical Architecture*, p. 22.

6 Cf. M.-A. Ouaknin *et al.*, *Rabbi Éliézer*, 12, p. 82.

7 Genesis 2:15.

8 J. N. Sparks *et al.*, *Orthodox Study Bible*, p. 691 n. 17.

9 *Ibid.*, Genesis 6:14-21, p. 12. See 1 Peter 3:18-22.

10 S. H. Faulring *et al.*, *Original Manuscripts*, p. 595.

11 See K. P. Jackson, *Book of Moses*, p. 10.

12 E.g., Abraham 4:4, 4:17.

13 M. T. Walton, Professor Seixas, p. 42.

14 S. H. Faulring *et al.*, *Original Manuscripts*, OT1, p. 86.

It did not happen the way that Moses said, “They hid in an ark.”¹⁵ Rather they hid in a particular place, not only Noah but also many other people from the unshakable generation. They entered that place and hid in a bright cloud. Noah knew about his supremacy.¹⁶ With him was the enlightened one who had enlightened them since the first ruler had brought darkness upon the whole earth.

G7-7 A hymn of self-praise by the Sumerian king Šulgi of the Ur III Dynasty speaks of sky-travel via the royal *magur*-boat, e.g.: “The king, the [pure] *magur*-boat, [which traverses the sky]”;¹⁷ “His shining royal *magur*-boat... Which... was shining in the midst of the sky.”¹⁸ *Magur*-boats were also used for divine travel (e.g., the *magur*-boat of Enki).¹⁹ See also P. Artzi *et al.*, *Bar-Ilan Studies*, pp. 65-136, especially pp. 96, 105-107.

G7-8 In the following chiasmic structuring of the account, Wenham demonstrates the pattern of “waiting” throughout the story as well as the centrality of the theme of Genesis 8:1: “But God remembered Noah”.²⁰

7 days of waiting for flood (7:4)
 7 days of waiting for flood (7:10)
 40 days of flood (7:17a)
 150 days of water triumphing (7:24)
 150 days of water waning (8:3)
 40 days of waiting (8:6)
 7 days of waiting (8:10)
 7 days of waiting (8:12)

“The timetable of the Flood with its seven-day periods of waiting may indicated that he observed the Sabbath.”²¹

G7-9 The word describing the agent of divine movement is expressed in the beginning of the story of Creation and in the story of the Flood using the same Hebrew term, *ruach* (in Genesis 1:2, the KJV translates this as “spirit,” while in Genesis 8:1 it is rendered as “wind”). In the former, the *ruach* is described as “moving” using the Hebrew verb *merahepet*, which literally “denotes a physical activity of flight over water.”²² However, Walton has argued that the wider connotation in both the Creation and Flood accounts expresses “a state of preparedness”:²³ “*ruach* is related to the presence of the deity, preparing to participate in Creation.”²⁴

Consistent with this reading, which understands this verse as a period of divine preparation, the creation story in Joseph Smith’s book of Abraham employs the term “brooding” rather than “moving” as we find in the King James Version. Note that this change is consistent with the English translation given in the Hebrew grammar book that was studied by Joseph Smith in Kirtland.²⁵ John Milton²⁶ interpreted the passage similarly in *Paradise Lost*, drawing from images such as the dove sent out by Noah,²⁷ the dove at Jesus’ baptism,²⁸ and a hen protectively covering her young with her wing.²⁹

[T]hou from the first
 Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
 Dovelike satst brooding on the vast abyss
 And mad’st it pregnant.”

15 Genesis 7:7.
 16 Alternatively, “he (Noah) recognized his authority” (F. Wisse, *Apocryphon of John*, 29:12, p. 121); “Noah was aware of his divine calling” (H. W. Nibley, *Enoch*, p. 268)
 17 J. Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, Šulgi D, 48, p. 75.
 18 *Ibid.*, Šulgi D, 355-356, p. 87.
 19 *Ibid.*, p. 118 n. 354-361.
 20 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 157.
 21 *Ibid.*, p. 177.
 22 M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, p. 55.
 23 J. H. Walton, *Genesis 1*, p. 149.
 24 *Ibid.*
 25 See J. Seixas, *Manual*, p. 31.
 26 See H. J. Hodges, Dove; J. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 1:19-22, p. 16; cf. Augustine, *Literal*, 18:36; E. A. W. Budge, *Cave*, p. 44.
 27 Genesis 8:6-12.
 28 John 1:32.
 29 Luke 13:34.

“Brooding” enjoys rich connotations, including, as Nibley³⁰ observes, not only “to sit or incubate [eggs] for the purpose of hatching” but also:

... “to dwell continuously on a subject.” Brooding is just the right word—a quite long quiet period of preparation in which apparently nothing was happening. Something was to come out of the water, incubating, waiting—a long, long time.

Some commentators emphatically deny any connection of the Hebrew term with the concept of brooding.³¹ However, the “brooding” interpretation is not only attested by a Syriac cognate³² but also has a venerable history, going back at least to Rashi, who spoke specifically of the relationship between the dove and its nest. In doing so, he referred to the Old French term *acoveter*, related both to the modern French *couver* (from Latin *cubare* — to brood and protect) and *couvrir* (from Latin *cooperire* — to cover completely). Intriguingly, this latter sense is related to the Hebrew term for the atonement, *kipper*.³³

Going further, Margaret Barker admits the possibility of a subtle wordplay in examining the reversal of consonantal sounds between “brood/hover” and “atone”: “The verb for ‘hover’ is *rchp*, the middle letter is *cheth*, and the verb for ‘atone’ is *kpr*, the initial letter being a *kaph*, which had a similar sound. The same three consonantal sounds could have been word play, *rchp/kpr*.”³⁴ “There is sound play like this in the temple style.”³⁵ In this admittedly speculative interpretation, one may see an image of God, prior to the first day of Creation, figuratively “hovering/atoning” [*rchp/kpr*] over the singularity of the inchoate universe, just as the Ark smeared with pitch [*kaphar*] later moved over the face of the waters “when the waters cover[ed] over and atone[d] for the violence of the world.”³⁶

G7-10 This quote from E. Fox, *Books of Moses*, p. xxi illustrates the attitude of holistically oriented commentaries toward source-critical approaches:

Given the text I am now using, what has interested me here is chiefly the final form of the *Torah* books, how they fit together as artistic entities, and how they have combined traditions to present a coherent religious message. This was surely the goal of the final “redactor(s),” but it was not until recently a major goal of biblical scholars. While, therefore, I am not committed to refuting the tenets of source criticism in the strident manner of Benno Jacob and Umberto Cassuto, I have concentrated in this volume on the ‘wholeness’ of biblical texts, rather than on their growth out of fragments. My Commentary is aimed at helping the reader to search for unities and thematic development.

At the same time, in recent years I have found it increasingly fascinating to encounter the text’s complex layering. It appears that every time a biblical story or law was put in a new setting or redaction, its meaning, and the meaning of the whole, must have been somewhat altered. A chorus of different periods and concerns is often discernible, however faintly. Sometimes these function to “deconstruct” each other, and sometimes they actually create a new text ... As far as analysis of the text in this manner is concerned, I would recommend to the reader the brilliant work of E. L. Greenstein, *Torah* and D. Damrosch, *Narrative Covenant*.

30 H. W. Nibley, *Before Adam*, p. 69.

31 E.g., U. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, pp. 24-25.

32 F. Brown *et al.*, *Lexicon*, 7363, p. 934b.

33 M. Barker, *Atonement*; A. Rey, *Dictionnaire*, 1:555.

34 M. Barker, June 11, 2007.

35 *Ibid.* See additional examples in M. Barker, *Hidden*, pp. 15-17.

36 E. A. Harper, *You Shall Make*, p. 4.



FIGURE G8-1. *The Subsiding Waters of the Deluge*, 1829
Thomas Cole, 1801-1848

Thomas Cole's artistry evokes poignant emotions as it leads the viewer's eye from the foreground to the background of the painting. The rough rocks nearby recall recent scenes of cleansing upheaval and destruction; beyond them, the Ark is finally at rest in calm waters, a witness of the divine love that preserved its righteous passengers in their journey through the deep; in the distance, the towering peak is a beacon of hope, a "Sinai" for Noah — presaging new revelation for the faithful remnants of humanity.

Born in 1801, Thomas Cole emigrated with his family to the United States at the age of seventeen. Though primarily self-taught, he achieved early prominence through an exhibition of small paintings of Catskill landscapes and was made a fellow of the National Academy while still in his twenties. After a happy and productive visit to Europe in 1829-1831, he returned to the United States having executed a series of beautifully constructed paintings, including this one.

Cole is seen as the ideological father of what was eventually called the Hudson River School, a loosely coupled fraternity of like-minded artists. "From the start, Cole's style was marked by dramatic forms and vigorous technique, reflecting the British aesthetic theory of the Sublime, or fearsome, in nature. In the representation of American landscape, really in its infancy in the early nineteenth century, the application of the Sublime was virtually unprecedented, and moreover accorded with a growing appreciation of the wildness of native scenery that had not been seriously addressed by Cole's predecessors."¹

1 K. J. Avery, Hudson River School.

GENESIS 8

A New Creation, A New Covenant

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Overview

IN 1 Peter 3:18-21, Noah's journey through the Flood is compared with baptism. "[A]s Noah was rescued through water (i.e., the Flood) from an evil world and subsequently entered into a new and cleansed world, so the Christians are rescued through water (i.e., their baptism) from the evil world that surrounds them and are delivered into the new world of the Christian community."¹ Of course, the nature of both rescues as a "burial"² reminds us that these events save their participants not merely from evil but also from death. As Morales writes:³

While the macro-cosmos is buried in the cosmic waters, the Ark, serving as a micro-cosmos ... may also be seen to constitute a metaphoric burial of all the living creatures within. Several literary features of the narrative point in this direction. The first is simply that the placement of the characters within the Ark occurs amidst the very imagery of death ...⁴ Secondly, the idea of burial is supported in the broader sense of being "hidden out of sight."⁵ To escape the burial of the world in the deluge, Noah and his household, and all the creatures with him, must "enter" and be "shut in"⁶ the Ark. Perhaps a bit speculatively, R. W. L. Moberly points out that humans and animals appear to live in darkness within the Ark. Thirdly, the significant term "ark" is most probably an Egyptian loanword from either *Tbt*, with reference to a chest, casket, coffin, or *db't*, meaning shrine, sarcophagus. Finally, it is perhaps not irrelevant here to note that understanding the Ark as a burial has been a typical reading throughout the history of the church. Waltke takes a similar reading: "The elect covenant family going through the sea of death and coming forth from their burial chamber⁷ is a pledge that the redeemed will be brought through the cataclysm of the final judgment."⁸ Broadly, then, the idea of burial fits precisely within the context of death and rebirth.

1 P. J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, p. 266.

2 Compare Ether 6:6-10, where the Jaredite barges are described as being "buried in the deep" during their journey. See also Ether 2:24-25. With respect to baptism as burial, see Romans 6:3-6.

3 L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, pp. 136-137.

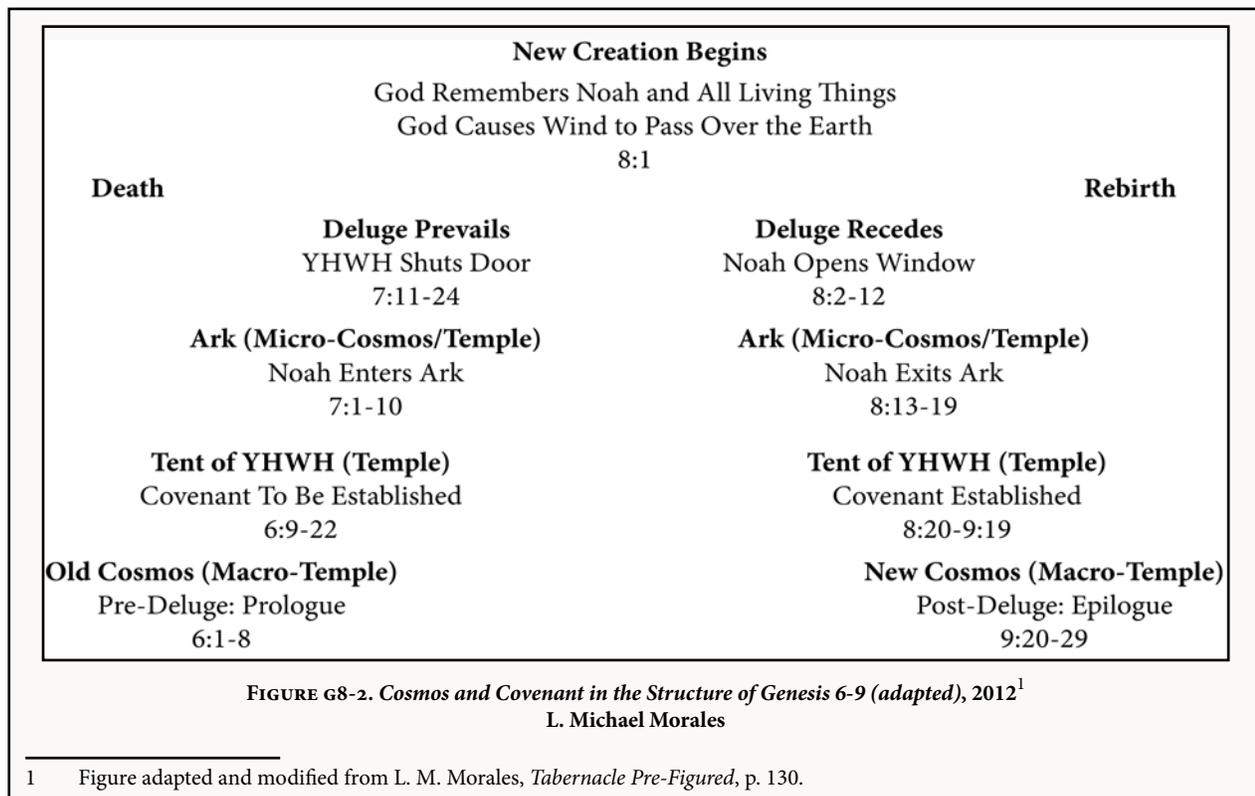
4 "In theological language, and considered a 'baptism' in the New Testament (1 Peter 3:20-21), the subjects within the Ark are dying to the old creation in preparation for the new" (L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 136 n. 77).

5 "In Genesis 23:2, 8 Abraham twice declares his longing to 'bury my dead out of my sight.' In Joshua 2:6, when Rahab hides the pair of spies from (the sight of) the king's men, a metaphoric death-burial seems to be portrayed — bolstered by covering them with flax, from which burial linen was made. Incidentally, even the English 'ark,' from the Latin *arca*, from the verb *arcere*, designates a covered receptacle. Cf. V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 280 n. 3." (L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 137 n. 78).

6 Genesis 7:16.

7 Isaiah 26:19-21.

8 B. K. Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 152. "Interestingly, here, Genesis 7:16 and Isaiah 26:20 both reference safety from judgment via a shut door" (L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 137 n. 82).



The figure above illustrates the process of death and rebirth as reflected the structure of the Flood story — a process that is intimately connected with the life-giving presence of God in the macro-temple of the Cosmos and the micro-cosmos of the Ark and the Tent. The story begins in the heavenly throne room — a “control room of the Cosmos”⁹ as Walton terms it. From that vantage point, “God saw that the wickedness of man was great”¹⁰ and purposed to “destroy man ... from the face of the earth.”¹¹ The scene then shifts to an earthly sanctuary¹² where Noah received instructions about building the Ark¹³ and the promise that God would establish His covenant with him.¹⁴

When chaos reigned on the earth during the Flood, God’s presence was not completely withdrawn. In a movement similar to the divine concealment that the Lurianic *kabbalah* terms “contraction,”¹⁵ the fulness of God’s glory was, as it were, concentrated in one place — the Ark — which continued to represent in microcosm the image of what would again become the model for a fully renewed Creation.¹⁶ Until that day, however, the Ark remained “to space what the Sabbath is to time, a recollection of the protological dimension bounded

⁹ J. H. Walton, *Genesis I*, p. 115.

¹⁰ Genesis 6:5.

¹¹ Genesis 6:7.

¹² Though we have no explicit record of a prediluvian sanctuary for Noah in the Bible, surely he built an altar to offer sacrifices and to call upon the Lord in likeness of Adam (Moses 5:4-12) before the Flood, just as the record attests that he did afterward (Genesis 8:20). Logically, he would have received the revelation to build the Ark in such a place (Genesis 6:13-21).

¹³ Genesis 6:14-21.

¹⁴ Genesis 6:18.

¹⁵ Hebrew *tzimtzum*. See *Endnote G8-1*, p. 294.

¹⁶ Articles of Faith 1:10. See T. D. Alexander, *From Eden*, pp. 24-26, 42; J. D. Levenson, *Temple and World*, pp. 297-298.

by mundane reality.”¹⁷ In likeness of the temple, the Ark became for a time “the moral center of the universe, the source from which holiness and a terrifying justice radiate[d]”¹⁸ to the chaotic world that surrounded it.¹⁹

The turning point of the story is when “God remembered Noah.” Then He began again to assert the glory of His presence on the world through the movement of the divine “wind,” the stopping of the “fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven,” and the resultant return of the waters “from off the earth.”²⁰ Exiting the Ark, Noah “built an altar unto the Lord,”²¹ “offered burnt offerings,”²² and established a covenant with God.²³ Then, according to our reading of the story, Noah personally ascended from the Tent of YHWH to the heavenly throne room of the renewed Cosmos where he received a fulness of blessings.²⁴ The subsequent actions of Noah’s sons foreshadowed the patterns of their later lives. Accordingly, Noah prophesied the fates of his righteous and wicked posterity.²⁵

The remainder of this overview further explores Creation and temple motifs within Genesis 8. Of special note are the rich thematic connections between the emergence of the dry land at Creation, the settling of the Ark at the top of the first mountain to emerge from the Flood, New Year’s Day, the Tabernacle, and Solomon’s Temple.

Most of the significant elements in the Garden of Eden are present in Noah’s garden: a prominent mountain; fruit, the eating of which leads to important consequences; and a place of holiness where unauthorized entry is forbidden. In the chapter of commentary on Genesis 9, we will show how this holy place becomes the scene of a “Fall” and consequent judgment.

The Ark Rests

Following the deluge and the slow subsiding of the waters, the dry land appeared at last. Note that the Hebrew describes the final parking of the Ark in terms of “rest,” reminding us of the verb that underlies Noah’s name.²⁶

Ancient Israelites believed the holiest spot on earth to be the Foundation Stone in front of the Ark of the Covenant within the temple at Jerusalem:²⁷ “It was the first solid material to emerge from the waters of Creation, and it was upon this stone that the Deity effected Creation.” The depiction of the Ark-Temple of Noah perched upon Mount Ararat would have evoked similar temple imagery for the ancient reader of the Bible.

Spotlighting the theme of a new beginning, the number “one” plays a key role in the description of re-creation after the Flood. For example, note that “on the *first* day of the [tenth] month ... the tops of the mountains [were] seen,” and that “in the six hundred and *first* year [of Noah’s life] in the *first* month, the *first* day of the month ... the waters were dried up.”²⁸ “There can be no mistaking the emphasis on the number one,” writes

17 J. D. Levenson, *Temple and World*, p. 298.

18 *Ibid.* See *Endnote M7-1*, p. 188.

19 See J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, p. 58 for a discussion of an analogous process that occurred after the transgression of Adam and Eve.

20 Genesis 8:1-3.

21 Genesis 8:20.

22 *Ibid.*

23 Genesis 9:8-17.

24 See OVERVIEW Genesis 9, p. 300.

25 Genesis 9:24-27.

26 R. S. Hess, *Studies*, p. 28. See *Endnote M8-16*, p. 246.

27 J. M. Lundquist, *Meeting Place*, p. 7.

28 Genesis 8:5, 13. For overviews of interpretation issues arising from different calendrical systems used in various textual traditions of the flood story, see P. Guillaume, *Sifting*; H. R. Jacobus, *Flood Calendars*.

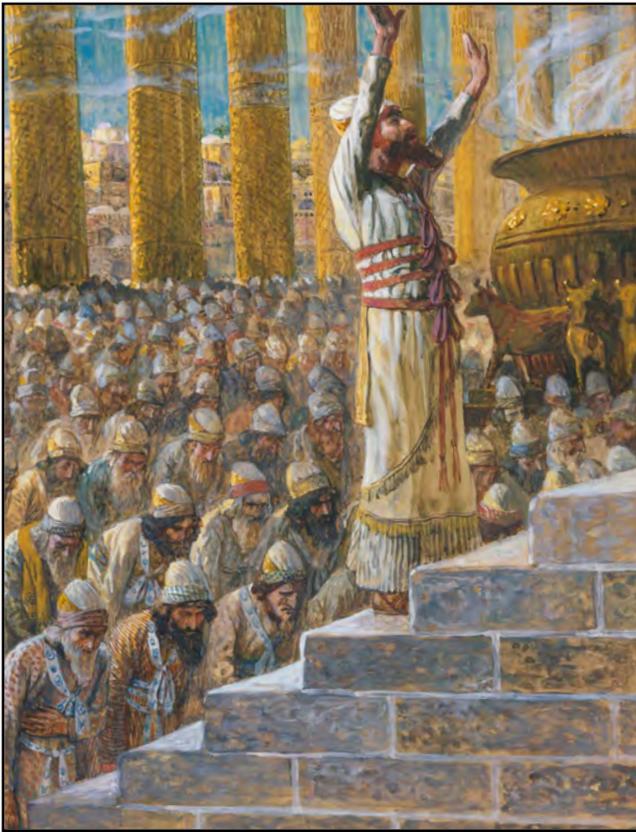


FIGURE G8-3. *Solomon Dedicates the Temple at Jerusalem, ca. 1896-1902*

J. James Tissot, 1836–1902

“The Bible preserves a lengthy account of the dedication of Solomon’s Temple,¹ which provides important insights into Israelite temple theology. The dedication ceremony consisted of a joyful celebration, with the priests bringing the Ark to the Temple while the people gathered in front of the Temple making sacrifices. After the Ark was installed in the Holy of Holies the Lord showed his acceptance of the temple by manifesting his presence through His ‘glory’ and a ‘cloud’ filling the house of the Lord² — just as at the dedication of the Tabernacle³

In his speech and prayer Solomon ... connected the Temple with the Mosaic Tabernacle and Mount Sinai, ‘where the Lord made a covenant with the Israelites,’ as well as the Davidic Covenant that ‘there shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children look to their way, to walk before me.’⁴ Thus for the Israelites the Temple was a symbol of their nation and kingship, both based on a conditional covenant.⁵

1 1 Kings 8; 2 Chronicles 5.

2 1 Kings 8:10-11.

3 Exodus 40:34.

4 1 Kings 8:9, 25.

5 W. J. Hamblin *et al.*, *Temple*, pp. 26-27.

Claus Westermann. Moreover, both of these verses, like their counterpart in the story of the original creation, use the rarer Hebrew term *yom ehad*, corresponding to the English cardinal term “day one” rather than the common ordinal term “first day.” This would hint to the ancient reader that the date had special ritual significance.²⁹ Consider that it was also the “*first day of the first month*”³⁰ when the Tabernacle was dedicated, “while Solomon’s temple was dedicated at the New Year festival in the autumn (the month of Ethanim...).”³¹ Consistent with usage in ritual texts within the Bible and other texts from the ancient Near East, Mark Smith concludes that the Hebrew cardinal term “day one” does not mark... the beginning of time in any sort of absolute way” but rather is an expression “suggestive of the ritual world” that can be found within narratives that are themselves infused throughout “with temple and ritual sensibility.”³² More explicitly, Westermann concludes that:³³

29 M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, p. 81. Besides Genesis 1:5, 8:5, and 8:13, Smith notes this use of *ehad* for “(day) one” in Exodus 40:2, 17; Leviticus 23:24; Numbers 1:1, 18, 29:1, 33:38; and Ezekiel 26:1, 29:17, 31:1, 32:1, and 45:18.

30 Exodus 40:1, emphasis mine.

31 N. Wyatt, *Water*, pp. 215-216. See 1 Kings 8:2. Wyatt notes that the expression about the New Year festival comes from S. W. Holloway, *What Ship*, remarking that “[m]any scholars regard the search for the New Year festival to be something of a futile exercise” (N. Wyatt, *Water*, p. 235 n. 129).

32 M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, p. 81. Besides Genesis 1:5, 8:5, and 8:13, Smith notes this use of *ehad* for “(day) one” in Exodus 40:2, 17; Leviticus 23:24; Numbers 1:1, 18, 29:1, 33:38; and Ezekiel 26:1, 29:17, 31:1, 32:1, and 45:18.

33 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 450, emphasis added.

	CREATION: GEN 1		RE-CREATION: GEN 8-9	
FIRST DAY	1.2	“earth,” “deep,” “Spirit” (<i>rūah</i>), “waters”	8.1b-2a	“wind” (<i>rūah</i>), “earth,” “waters,” “deep”
SECOND DAY	1.7-8	“waters,” “sky”	8.2b	“sky”
THIRD DAY	1.9	“water,” “dry ground,” “appear”	8.3-5	“water,” “tops of the mountains,” “appear”
FOURTH DAY	1.14-19	Creation of luminaries	8.13	Creation of luminaries unnecessary (unveiling of luminaries?) ⁸⁷
FIFTH DAY	1.20	“birds,” “above the earth,” “across (<i>al-pʿnē</i>) the surface of the expanse”	8.7-8	“raven,” “from the earth,” “from the surface (<i>al-pʿnē</i>) of the ground”
SIXTH DAY	1.24	“creatures,” “livestock,” “creatures that move along the ground,” “wild animals”	8.17	“creature,” “birds,” “animals,” “creatures that move along the ground”
	1.26	“man,” “image”	9.6	“image,” “man”
	1.28	“blessed,” “be fruitful,” “increase in number,” “fill the earth,” “rule...every living creature”	9.1-2	“blessed,” “be fruitful,” “increase in number,” “fill the earth,” “fear...of you...upon every creature”
SEVENTH DAY	2.1-3	“God rested (<i>yišbōt</i>),” “He rested” (<i>šābat</i>), “God blessed” (<i>wayʿbārek</i>)	8.21-9.2	“YHWH breathed the restful breath” (<i>hannîḥōah</i>), “shall not rest off (<i>yišbōtū</i>),” “God blessed” (<i>wayʿbārek</i>)

FIGURE G8-4. Days of Creation and Re-Creation, 2012,¹
L. Michael Morales

¹ In L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 146.

The day on which the waters of the flood disappeared from the earth, the day of the end of the flood, becomes New Year’s Day. The cosmos is renewed in the cultic celebration of this day. It is the conclusion of the Flood narrative that later, in muted and covert ways, provides the rationale for the annual cultic renewal of the cosmos at the New Year’s feast.

Emphasizing “the stability of this re-creation,”³⁴ God’s promises to Noah articulate the re-establishment of the alternating rhythm of the times and seasons required to sustain agricultural life and the cultic calendar that goes along with it. In Genesis 8:22, we read:

While the earth remaineth,
seedtime and harvest,
and cold and heat,
and summer and winter,
and day and night
shall not cease.

Apart from these brief allusions to selected works of the subsequent days of Creation, Harper’s detailed study³⁵ reveals that “the majority of the created works of the first five days are completely disregarded” in the story of the Flood.³⁶ On the other hand, “the elements of the sixth day: animals (with birds attached), the *adam* (male and female in the image of God), the blessings, commands, and provisions of food are ... recalled, rearranged, and at times reinterpreted” within subsequent episodes of Noah’s life.

We now leave the story of re-creation and enter a garden.

³⁴ J. H. Walton, *Genesis 1*, p. 165. Cf. J. H. Walton, *Ancient*, pp. 190-191.
³⁵ E. A. Harper, *In the Beginning*, p. 19.
³⁶ However, see additional allusions in FIGURE G8-4, p. 281.



FIGURE G8-5. *Noah's Sacrifice*, ca. 1896-1902
J. James Tissot, 1836-1902

"Some say ... the altar that Adam built was demolished by the waters of the Flood. Noah rebuilt it, but it was demolished in the generation of the Tower of Babel. Then "Abraham built the altar there; ... he bound his son Isaac."¹ That was the site where in the future the Temple in Jerusalem would be built, and the place of the altar was the same as the Temple altar."²

These stories are examples "of mythic geography, with little consideration for actual geographic location. Instead, what matters is linking together these sacrifices in order to portray the existence of this archetypal altar for sacrifices to God."³

1 Genesis 22:9.

2 H. Schwartz, *Tree*, p. 415 n. 530. Cf. J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah* 2, 34:9:2, p. 6; M.-A. Ouaknin *et al.*, *Rabbi Éliézer*, 31, p. 186; W. G. Braude, *Midrash on Psalms*, 92:6, 2:113; D. C. Matt, *Zohar* 1, 1:69b-70a, p. 410. See also p. 410 n. 511,

3 *Ibid.*

Garden and Covenant

Nothing in the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden can be understood without reference to the temple.³⁷ Neither can the story of Noah and his family in the garden setting of a renewed earth be appreciated fully without taking the temple as its background.

Allusions to Garden of Eden and temple motifs begin as soon as Noah and his family leave the Ark. Just as the book of Moses highlights Adam's diligence in offering sacrifice as soon as he entered the fallen world,³⁸ Genesis describes Noah's first action on the renewed earth as the building of an altar for what Morales³⁹ aptly calls "restful"⁴⁰-smelling" burnt offerings.⁴¹

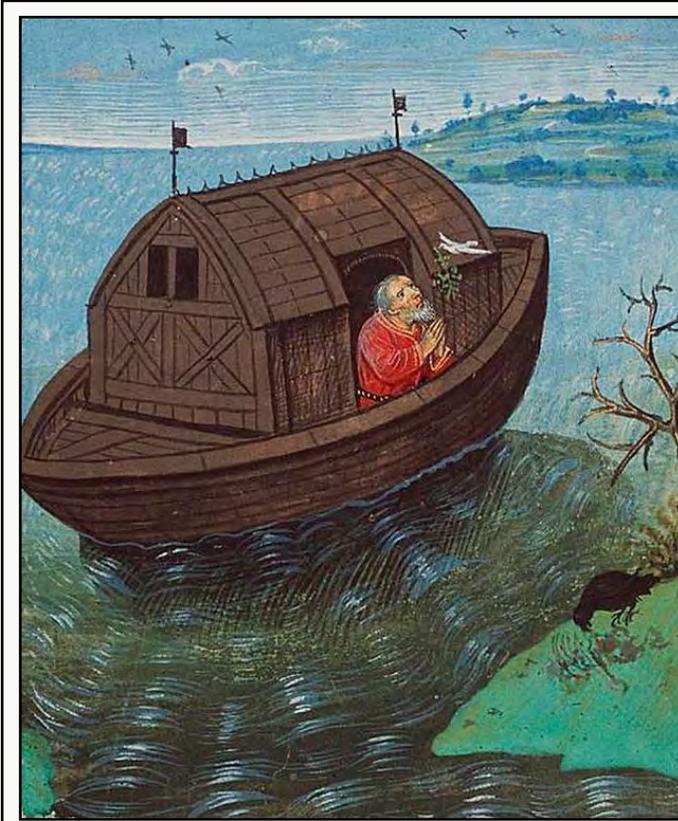
37 J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 2-4.

38 Moses 5:5-8.

39 L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 171.

40 The Hebrew adjective *nichoach*, used to describe the sweet smell of the sacrifice, is a deliberate word play on the name of Noah (G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 189).

41 Genesis 8:20.



**FIGURE G8-6. *The Dove Returns to the Ark*, ca. 1450-1460
Dreux Jean, fl. 1448-1467**

Dreux Jean, also known by the name Dreux Bachoyer, was born in Paris, but he immigrated to Flanders before beginning his artistic career, perhaps because of the English occupation of Paris during the Hundred Years War ... [He] is best known for fusing the traditions of contemporary Parisian illumination with the naturalism of Flemish panel painting in his work.¹

“Some say that when Noah called upon the raven to go forth from the Ark, the raven was incensed. It began to argue with Noah, saying, ‘Of all the birds in the Ark, why do you pick on me? Your Master hates me since He commanded you to bring seven pairs of the clean creatures into the Ark, but only one pair of the unclean, like me. You hate me because you could have chosen any one of the species of which there are seven pairs, but instead you chose me. What if the Angel of Heat or the Angel of Cold should smite me, wouldn’t the world be short one kind [species]? So why is it that you chose me? Or do you desire my mate?’

Others say that when Noah sent forth the raven to determine the state of the world, it “went forth to and fro”² until it found a carcass of a man upon the summit of a mountain. It settled there and did not return to the Ark. That is when Noah called upon the dove, and sent it forth.”³

- 1 Dreux Jean.
- 2 Genesis 8:7.
- 3 H. Schwartz, *Tree*, p. 462 n. 587. Cf., e.g., J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah* 2, 33:5:3, p. 348; M.-A. Ouaknin *et al.*, *Rabbi Éliézer*, 23, p. 140; H. N. Bialik *et al.*, *Legends*, 2:127, p. 28.

Likewise, in each account, God’s blessing is followed by a commandment to multiply and replenish the earth.⁴² Both stories contain instructions about what the protagonists are and are not to eat.⁴³ Notably in each case, a covenant is established in a context of ordinances and signs or tokens.⁴⁴ More specifically, according to Pseudo-Philo,⁴⁵ the rainbow as a sign or token of a covenant of higher priesthood blessings was said by God to be an analog of Moses’ staff, a symbol of kingship.⁴⁶ Both the story of Adam and Eve and the story of Noah prominently feature the theme of nakedness covered by a garment.⁴⁷ Noah, like Adam, is called the “lord of the whole earth.”⁴⁸ Surely it is no exaggeration to say that Noah is portrayed as a new Adam, “reversing the estrangement” between God and man by means of his atoning sacrifice.⁴⁹

- 42 See Moses 2:28; Genesis 9:1, 7. Compare Genesis 17:2; Exodus 1:7.
- 43 See Moses 2:28-30, 3:9, 16-17; Genesis 9:2-4.
- 44 See Moses 5:5, 59; Genesis 9:9-17.
- 45 See Pseudo-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities*, 19:11, pp. 129-130.
- 46 See J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, *Investiture Panel*, pp. 38-39 for a brief summary of the symbolism of the staff, and B. N. Fisk, *Remember*, pp. 276-281 for Pseudo-Philo’s identification of the staff with the rainbow. See *Endnote G8-2*, p. 294.
- 47 See Moses 4:27; Genesis 9:21-22.
- 48 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 198.
- 49 L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 197. Cf. O. S. Wintermute, *Jubilees*, 6:2, p. 66: “And he made atonement for the land. And he took the kid of a goat, and he made atonement with its blood for all the sins of the land because everything which was on it had been blotted out except those who were in the ark with Noah.” Cf. J. C. VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 6:2, p. 36. See also F. G. Martinez, *Genesis Apocryphon*, 10:13, p. 231: “I atoned for the whole earth.”



FIGURE G8-7. Ağrı Dağı in Eastern Turkey

This mountain is identified in Christian tradition as Mount Ararat.¹ “This identification, however, is incorrect. The Bible does not refer to a summit called Ararat, but to “the mountains of Ararat,” and this proper name refers to the kingdom of Urartu.² Ancient Jewish authors and early translators of the Bible were well aware that there was no mountain called Ararat. The author of the second-century BCE book of *Jubilees*³ states that the Ark landed on ‘Mount Lubar’ in ‘the land of Ararat,’ and the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus knew that ‘Ararat’ referred to a summit south of Lake Van. He also records a tradition [from Nicolaus of Damascus] that identified Noah’s landing site with Mount Baris in a country north of the Tigris called Gordyene.⁴ [Citing Berossus,] Josephus adds that in his days, bitumen could still be found near the site of the Ark. Babylonian sources concur. [T]he *Epic of Gilgamesh*⁵ also refers to mountains in what is now Kurdistan, and the *Qur’an* speaks of Al-Gudi.⁶ The author of *Jubilees*, Flavius Josephus, the Babylonian writers, and [various commentators on] the *Qur’an* have retained an older tradition, which puts the Ark’s landing site between Lake Van and the Tigris.”⁷

Elizabeth Harper pursues the question of “Why Ararat?”⁸ “If the aim was emblematic tall mountains, why not cite the more usual Lebanese mountains.⁹ In the light of the wordplay of Genesis 5:29 another explanation presents itself. Ararat evokes the Hebrew term *arar* (to curse). Does the *tevah* [ark] — evocative of temple and atonement, a place of mercy and ransom, containing Noah the one to relieve the world of the curse — now bring rest upon Mount Cursed? The observant Israelite might even note that this is seven days after the Day of Atonement.¹⁰ Is this, finally, some real hope? Or might more cynical readers wonder what cursed mountains are doing in the postdiluvian, apparently cleansed world?”

1 In R. N. Holzapfel *et al.*, *Jehovah*, p. 27. For a good overview of interpretations of biblical references to Ararat in ancient biblical translations and early biblical retellings, see M. E. Stone *et al.*, Mount Ararat.

2 Cf. Jeremiah 51:27. See also 2 Kings 19:37; Isaiah 37:38.

3 O. S. Wintermute, *Jubilees*, 5:28, p. 66. See also 10:15, p. 76. Cf. J. C. VanderKam, *Book of Enoch*, 5:28, p. 36; 10:15, p. 60.

4 F. Josephus, *Antiquities*, 1:3:5-6, p. 29. Cf. “Cordyene” (M. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, 8:4, p. 42; J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah 1*, 33:4:2, p. 348), elsewhere Kadrun, Kardu = Kurdistan (M. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, p. 42 n. 3). For additional sources and discussion, see L. Ginzberg, *Legends*, 5:186 n. 48; S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, p. 239 n. 15, pp. 240-242 n. 23.

5 See S. Dalley, *Gilgamesh*, p. 133 n. 135. See also 11:42-43, p. 114.

6 A. Jones, *Qur’an*, 11:44, p. 211. Since the term itself refers to a hill generically, it is possible that there was no intention in the *Qur’an* to refer to a specific mountain. Jones comments: “Jewish and later Muslim tradition places al-Judi in present day Kurdistan, but initially Arab hearers would have identified it with a mountain in northern central Arabia” (*ibid.*, p. 211 n. 5).

7 Ararat.

8 E. A. Harper, *It’s All* (2013), p. 48.

9 Jeremiah 18:14; Psalm 133:3.

10 Leviticus 23:26-43.

What about Noah's garden itself? Though no analogs to the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge are explicitly mentioned, an olive tree is implied in the story of the dove which returns to Noah with its branch. A variety of texts associate the olive tree with the Garden of Eden. For example, ancient traditions recount that on his sickbed Adam requested Eve and Seth to return to the Garden to retrieve oil — presumably olive oil — from the “tree of his mercy.”⁵⁰ Recalling the story of the dove that returned to Noah's ark with the olive branch in its mouth, a rabbinical opinion states that the “gates of the garden of Eden opened for the dove, and from there she brought it.”⁵¹ Two days after a revelation describing how war was to be “poured out upon all nations,” Joseph Smith designated D&C 88, by way of contrast, as the “olive leaf... plucked from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord's message of peace to us.”⁵²

Although no parallel to the four rivers of Eden is explicitly mentioned in the description of Noah's garden, remember that the sources of two of these rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, lie in the region of the “mountains of Ararat.”⁵³ In addition, most of the other significant elements of the Garden of Eden are present in Noah's garden: a prominent mountain,⁵⁴ fruit whose eating leads to important consequences,⁵⁵ and a place of holiness where unauthorized entry is forbidden.⁵⁶

However, important differences also exist between the garden story of Adam and Eve and that of Noah. Whereas the Garden of Eden is situated in a terrestrial world, Noah's garden is clearly portrayed as telestial, on the earth as we know it. Noah, not God, plants it. Moreover, the earmarks of telestial law are evident in the details of the commandments given to Noah.⁵⁷ Man's dominion in Noah's garden is to be experienced by the beasts with fear and dread,⁵⁸ for they are to become the meat of man.⁵⁹ Anticipation of conflict and bloodshed among Noah's descendants is implicit in the description given of the punishment to be meted out for murder,⁶⁰ recalling the tragic precedent in the slaying of Abel by Cain.⁶¹ Clearly Noah's garden scenes do not take place in an Eden paradise but instead are set in a fallen world.

50 G. A. Anderson *et al.*, *Synopsis*, Latin 36:2, p. 40E; S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 36:1-3, pp. 39-40.

51 J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah I*, 33:6, p. 351. Others said it came from the Mount of Olives (e.g., M. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, 8:11, p. 43).

52 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 14 January 1833, p. 18.

53 Genesis 8:4. See N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 57. In the Sibylline Oracles we read that there “the springs of the great river Marsyos had sprung up” (J. J. Collins, *Sibylline Oracles*, 1:265, p. 341). L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 153 likewise observes:

It is, perhaps, not irrelevant here to note that the Babylonian flood-hero, Utnapishtim, gains eternal life by being translated to the *pī nārāti*, the Eden-like “mouth of the rivers” (see A. George, *Gilgamesh*, 11:205, p. 95), this *Urzeit—Endzeit* concept whereby the end is like the beginning (a new beginning) informing also the parallels between the creation and deluge/re-creation accounts, between Ararat and Eden.

54 Ezekiel 28:13-14; Genesis 8:4. Regarding the presence of a cosmic mountain in Eden, see D. W. Parry, *Garden*, pp. 133-137.

55 Genesis 3:1-24; 9:20-27.

56 See OVERVIEW Genesis 9, p. 309.

57 See Leon R. Kass in GLEANINGS Genesis 9, p. 325.

58 See Genesis 9:2.

59 See Genesis 9:3.

60 See Genesis 9:5-6.

61 Genesis 4:8. See *Endnote G8-3*, p. 294.

Genesis 8: Text and Commentary

<p style="text-align: center;">CHAPTER 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>THE WATERS DECREASE (PP. 287-288)</i></p> <p>AND ^aGod remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made ^ba wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged;</p> <p>2 The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained;</p> <p>3 And ^athe waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.</p> <p>4 And ^athe ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the ^bmountains of Ararat.</p> <p>5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were ^athe tops of the mountains seen.</p> <p>6 ¶ And it came to pass ^aat the end of forty days, that ^bNoah opened the window of the ark which he had made:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>BIRDS ARE SENT FORTH (PP. 288-290)</i></p> <p>7 And ^ahe ^bsent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.</p> <p>8 Also ^ahe sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated</p>	<p>from off the face of the ground;</p> <p>9 But the dove found ^ano rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for ^bthe waters were on the face of the whole earth: then ^che put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.</p> <p>10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;</p> <p>11 And the dove came in to him ^ain the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was ^ban olive leaf ^cplucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.</p> <p>12 And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>THE GROUND IS DRY (PP. 290-291)</i></p> <p>13 ¶ And it came to pass in the ^asix hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and ^bNoah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry.</p> <p>14 And ^ain the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>NOAH LEAVES THE ARK (P. 291)</i></p> <p>15 ¶ And God spake unto Noah, saying,</p> <p>16 ^aGo forth of the ark, ^bthou, and</p>	<p>thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.</p> <p>17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; ^athat they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.</p> <p>18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:</p> <p>19 ^aEvery beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>NOAH'S SACRIFICE (PP. 291-293)</i></p> <p>20 ¶ And ^aNoah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered ^bburnt offerings on the ^caltar.</p> <p>21 And ^athe Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, ^bI will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for ^cthe imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; ^dneither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.</p> <p>22 While the earth remaineth, ^aseedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.</p>
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1 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 earth, and the waters assuaged**;

2 The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained;

3 And **the waters returned** from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

4 And **the ark rested** in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

- 1 a **God remembered Noah.** This verse is the turning point of the story of Noah.¹ The phrase “God remembered Noah” does not imply that Noah had ever been forgotten. Indeed, a better way to convey the sense of the phrase might be to translate it as “God had *not* forgotten Noah.” Sarna explains: “In the Bible, ‘remembering,’ particularly on the part of God, is not the retention or recollection of a mental image, but a focusing upon the object of memory that results in action.”² John Sailhamer comments further.³

The description of God’s rescue of Noah foreshadows God’s deliverance of Israel in the Exodus. Just as later “God remembered his covenant”⁴ and sent “a strong east wind” to dry up the waters before his people (Exodus 14:21) so that they “went through ... on dry ground,”⁵ so also in the story of the Flood we read that “God remembered” those in the ark and sent a “wind” over the waters so that his people might come out on “dry ground.”

- b **a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged.** I.e., the waters subsided. In ancient Hebrew the movement of air and the movement of the Divine spirit are described by the same word (*ruach*). Here, as in the story of Creation, the *ruach* “indicates the beginning of new life.”⁶ “As the waters are the symbol of chaos, the undoing of Creation, so the movement of the wind ... heralds the reimposition of order.”⁷
- 3 a **the waters returned.** Cassuto notes the double mention of the verb *shuv* (Hebrew “return”) in this verse, making it clear “that it refers to the waters returning to the places whence they issued ... The waters came from both the heavens and the great deep and returned to each of them.”⁸ The same verb is often used in scriptural context to mean “repentance.”⁹
- 4 a **the ark rested.** The Hebrew *va-tanach* describes the final parking of the Ark in terms of “rest,” reminding us of the verb that underlies Noah’s name.¹⁰ According to the calendar in *Jubilees*,¹¹ this was a Friday — thus the Ark came to its rest just in time for the Sabbath.¹²
- b **mountains of Ararat.** JST OT2 reads “mountain.”¹³ For a discussion of the geography of the scene, see the caption of FIGURE G8-7, p. 284. “In primitive flood stories the mountain is very often the place where the survivors were saved without any technical means; they fled to the mountain peak which the waters had not reached. It was only at a later stage of

1 See FIGURE G8-2, p. 278.

2 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 56. Compare Genesis 19:29, 30:22; Exodus 2:24, 6:5.

3 J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 89.

4 Exodus 2:24.

5 Exodus 14:22.

6 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 101.

7 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 56.

8 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 102.

9 See, e.g., COMMENTARY Moses 6:52-b, p. 75; J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, COMMENTARY 5:4-b, p. 357.

10 See *Endnote M8-16*, p. 246.

11 J. C. VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 5:27-28, p. 36.

12 See G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 184.

13 S. H. Faulring *et al.*, *Original Manuscripts*, p. 628.

4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the **mountains of Ararat**.

5 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 mountains seen**.

6 ¶ And it came to pass **at the end of forty days**, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

7 And **he sent forth a raven**, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also **he sent forth a dove** from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;

development that the story tells of a vessel that lands on a mountain. The narrative often has an etiological conclusion in this context. Either the mountain peak becomes a holy place or the narrative says that the remains of the ship are still to be found there, or there are traces of the footprints of those who were saved from the flood.¹⁴ “One can read ... how, despite the biblical account which does not mention any particular mountain, there is no end to enterprises to find the Ark or its remains, and how such enterprises always find credibility.”¹⁵

5 a **the tops of the mountains seen**. The tops of other mountains appeared seventy-three days after the Ark rested on the highest mountain.¹⁶

6 a **at the end of forty days**. “If this is not a round number, it makes Noah start work on a Sunday, the day after the Sabbath.”¹⁷

b **Noah opened the window of the ark**. God expected Noah to act for himself in finding out whether the earth was ready for his debarkation.

7 a **he sent forth a raven**. With regard to Noah’s release of the birds, Westermann remarks that it is “the most amazing of all motifs” in the worldwide stories of the Flood: “It is almost incredible how widespread this motif is and how similar the most widely separated texts are.”¹⁸ Anciently, mariners used birds to determine the proximity of land and to take their direction accordingly.¹⁹ Sarna observes:

The raven is a wild bird that is not discriminating in its diet.²⁰ It feeds on carrion as well as vegetation and could thus obtain its food from among the floating carcasses. That is why it made repeated forays [v. 7: “went forth to and fro”] from the Ark.²¹

b **sent forth**. Rather, “let out.”²²

8 a **he sent forth a dove**. “The dove ... is a symbol of beauty and gentleness, integrity and friendship. Time and again the maiden in the Song of Songs is called ‘my dove’ or ‘my dove, my perfect one’;²³ and her eyes and the eyes of the youth are compared to doves.”²⁴ A “phonetic affinity”²⁵ can be found between Noah (*noach*) and the term for dove (*hayyonah*)

14 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 443.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 444.

16 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 57.

17 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 186.

18 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 403. Sometimes three birds are sent out (e.g., a dove, a swallow, and a raven in *Gilgamesh* (A. George, *Gilgamesh*, 11:147-156, pp. 93-94).

19 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 446.

20 According to Leviticus 11:15 and Deuteronomy 14:14, it is an unclean animal.

21 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 57. See the caption to FIGURE G8-6, p. 283.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 57.

23 Song of Solomon 2:14; 5:2; 6:9.

24 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 108. See Song of Solomon 1:15; 4:1; 5:12.

25 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 186.

8 Also **he sent forth a dove** from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;

9 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 earth**: then **he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark**.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;

11 And the dove came in to him **in the evening**; and, lo, in her mouth was **an olive leaf plucked off**: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

which, on her first sortie from the Ark, found “no rest [*manoah*] for the sole of her foot.”²⁶ When the dove brought the olive leaf back on her second sortie, however, the leaf “rested” in her beak.²⁷ The dove “is white, a clean animal often used in sacrifice.”²⁸ Like other sacrificial animals, it is sometimes seen as a symbol of Israel²⁹ and therefore within this story it is an ideal representative of Noah himself.³⁰

9 a **no rest for the sole of her foot**. Westermann takes this phrase to mean that “not even the tiniest resting place”³¹ was available for the bird. However, a rabbinic view takes the phrase metaphorically: “It could not sustain itself in the world.”³²

b **the waters were on the face of the whole earth**. Hugh Nibley explains:³³

From where [Noah] was, ‘the whole earth’ was covered with water as far as he could see; after things had quieted down for 150 days and the Ark ground to a halt, it was still three months before he could see any mountain tops. But what were conditions in other parts of the world? If Noah knew that, he would not have sent forth messenger birds to explore. The flood as he described it is what he saw of it.”

c **he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark**. “When it returned, Noah took it in his hand to see if there was clay on its feet.”³⁴

d **he put forth his hand**. “This is the second reference in Genesis to putting forth one’s hand to take hold of something. Noah’s hand is stretched forth to offer refuge to one of God’s creatures. Earlier God had seen the possibility that man would ‘put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life’ (Moses 4:28). This is not a giving hand. It is a grasping hand.”³⁵

11 a **in the evening**. “That is, when birds customarily return to their nests. The note implies that the dove had been out all day, signifying the availability of resting places.”³⁶

b **an olive leaf**. Cassuto³⁷ explains that the dove brought Noah “good tidings, in the form possible to a creature that cannot speak.” Sarna discusses the symbolism of the olive tree as follows:³⁸

26 Genesis 8:9.
 27 M. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, 8:11, p. 43. See also p. 43 n. 11.
 28 See, e.g., Leviticus 1:14, 12:6.
 29 Hosea 7:11, 11:11.
 30 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, p. 186.
 31 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 448.
 32 R. M. Zlotowitz *et al.*, *Bereishis*, 1:269. Cf. Deuteronomy 28:65.
 33 H. W. Nibley, *Before Adam*, pp. 65-66.
 34 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 57.
 35 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 305.
 36 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 58.
 37 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 111.
 38 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 58.

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was **an olive leaf plucked off**: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

13 ¶ 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 earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

The olive tree, one of the earliest to be cultivated in the Near East, is an evergreen. It is extraordinarily sturdy and may thrive up to a thousand years. Thus it became symbolic of God's blessings of regeneration, abundance, and strength, which is most likely the function it serves here. In the present context the olive branch is invested with the idea of peace and reconciliation, and for this reason it was incorporated into the official emblem of the State of Israel.

The scenes following the Flood conjure up memories of the story of Adam and Eve. Though no analogs to the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge are explicitly mentioned in the description of the place where the Ark landed, an olive tree is implied in the story of the dove which returns to Noah with its branch. A variety of texts associate the olive tree with the Garden of Eden. For example, ancient traditions recount that on his sickbed Adam requested Eve and Seth to return to the Garden to retrieve oil — presumably olive oil — from the “tree of his mercy.”³⁹ Recalling the story of the dove that returned to Noah's ark with the olive branch in its mouth, a rabbinical opinion states that the “gates of the garden of Eden opened for the dove, and from there she brought it.”⁴⁰

- c **plucked off.** “The rare noun *taraf* connotes that it was freshly removed from the tree and was not flotsam, a sure sign that plant life had begun to renew itself.”⁴¹
- 13 a **in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month.** “On New Year's day, exactly one year after God first communicated with Noah, the ground was dry.”⁴² “Precisely at the commencement of the year, on the anniversary of Creation, the world resumed again the form that God had given it when first it came into being.”⁴³ Spotlighting the theme of a new beginning, the number “one” plays a key role in the description of recreation after the Flood. Moreover, Genesis 8:5 and 8:13, like their counterpart in the story of the original creation, use the rarer Hebrew term *yom ehad*, corresponding to the English cardinal term “day one” rather than the common ordinal term “first day.” This would hint to the ancient reader that the date had special ritual significance.⁴⁴ Just as Moses 3:1-3 lays a foundation for the institution of the Sabbath, so Genesis 8-9 provides a primeval precedent for the New Year celebration among the Israelites.⁴⁵
- b **Noah removed the covering of the ark.** The possibility signaled by Morales⁴⁶ that “the ‘covering [*mikseh*] of the Ark’ establishes a link to the [skin] ‘covering of the Tabernacle’⁴⁷ is significant.”⁴⁸

39 G. A. Anderson *et al.*, *Synopsis*, Latin 36:2, p. 40E; S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 36:1-3, pp. 39-40.

40 J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah 1*, 33:6:5, p. 351. Others said it came from the Mount of Olives (e.g., M. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, 8:11, p. 43).

41 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 58.

42 *Ibid.*

43 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 113.

44 See M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, p. 81. See also OVERVIEW Genesis 8, p. 280.

45 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 470.

46 L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 157.

47 Exodus 40:19.

48 See OVERVIEW Genesis 9, p. 310.

14 *And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.*

15 ¶ *And God spake unto Noah, saying,*

16 *Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.*

17 *Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.*

18 *And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:*

19 *Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.*

20 ¶ *And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.*

- 14 a ***in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month.*** The earth attained its dry state again “on the twenty-seventh day of the second month of the six hundred and first year [of Noah’s life], that is, if we count both the first and the last day, a year and eleven days after the commencement of the Deluge: a complete solar year of 365 days in all.”⁴⁹ Westermann adds: “The two statements then would represent two different systems of calculation, the lunar year and the solar year.”⁵⁰ Cassuto explains: “The *Septuagint*, which was composed in Egypt for the use of the Jews living there, who were accustomed to the Egyptian year of 365 days, also had in mind a complete year, and with this in view wrote twenty-seven instead of seventeen in Genesis 7:11 and in 8:4.”⁵¹
- 16 a ***Go forth.*** See COMMENTARY Moses 6:30-b, p. 59. The corresponding command for embarkation is found in Genesis 7:1. “There is a striking thematic parallel between the picture of God’s calling Noah out of the Ark⁵² and the call of Abraham.”⁵³ The author “is careful to show that ... Noah left the Ark only at God’s command.”⁵⁴
- b ***thou and thy wife.*** See also Genesis 8:18. “The variation in the order of persons from Genesis 6:18 and 7:7, where husbands and wives are not listed together, led midrashic sources to infer that sexual relationships were forbidden in the Ark and were permitted to be resumed only after disembarkation.”⁵⁵ See OVERVIEW Moses 8, p. 215.
- 17 a ***that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.*** Compare Moses 2:22.
- 19 a ***Every beast.*** Compare Moses 2:24.
- 20 a ***Noah builded an altar unto the Lord.*** Noah’s first action on the renewed earth as the building of an altar for burnt offerings. In contrast to every major action Noah had performed previously,⁵⁶ he made the sacrifice without divine instruction. In scripture this type of sacrifice is called a freewill offering.⁵⁷ It is foremost a means of rendering thanksgiving:⁵⁸

When a person has been saved from a terrible danger, or has escaped from a general catastrophe, his first reaction is to give thanks to him who saved him or helped him to escape. And there could be no greater thanksgiving than these sacrifices. Of the few

49 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 113. Cf. J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah 1*, 33:7:3, pp. 352-353.

50 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 450.

51 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, pp. 113-114.

52 Genesis 8:15-20.

53 J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 91; J. H. Sailhamer, *Meaning*, pp. 308-309. Genesis 12:1-7.

54 J. H. Sailhamer, *Meaning*, p. 308.

55 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 58. See J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah 2*, 34:7:1, p. 4.

56 “[I]f we treat as minor acts his sending forth the raven and the dove” (L. R. Kass, *Wisdom*, p. 171 n. 4).

57 Leviticus 22:17-25; Numbers 15:1-11. See V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis 1-17*, p. 308.

58 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 117.

20 ¶ *And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.*

21 *And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.*

domestic animals and birds that constituted his sole, meagre possessions for the new period of his life in a world that is completely waste, Noah gave up several animals and birds in honor of his Divine Savior.

In addition to describing this natural expression of thanks, the account portrays Noah as a new Adam, “reversing the estrangement” between God and man by means of this atoning sacrifice.⁵⁹

Westermann notes:⁶⁰ “The sacrifice of Noah is one of those elements which occurs very often in the flood narratives, e.g., in the Babylonian, Greek, Phoenician, Indian stories. Ziusudra, Utnapishtim, Deucalion, Demarius, Manu, all offer sacrifice after they have been saved.”

- b *burnt offerings.* “Significantly, Noah does not offer a libation, in contrast to Utnapishtim. The omission points up the fact that sacrifice is not food for God.”⁶¹
- c *altar.* Following “altar” the JST adds “and gave thanks unto the Lord, and rejoiced in his heart.”⁶²

21 a *the Lord smelled a sweet savour.* The JST makes Noah rather than the Lord the subject of verses 21 and 22:⁶³ “*And the Lord spake unto Noah, and he blessed him. And Noah smelled a sweet savor, and he said in his heart; I will call on the name of the Lord, that he will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; and that he will not again smite any more every thing living, as he hath done, while the earth remaineth, and that seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night may not cease with man.*”

In the KJV translation of Genesis, the “sweet savour” was not principally due to the pleasant odor of the sacrifice.⁶⁴ The play on words in this verse make it clear that it was Noah’s righteousness that made the offering “sweet” or, more literally “restful” (*nihoah*). God has finished the work of re-creation and will rest from His labors.⁶⁵ Noah will build God’s sanctuary⁶⁶ and, as His righteous and duly-appointed king, will rule on earth in accordance with divine law.

- b *I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake.* A lifting of the curse had been prophesied uncomprehendingly by Lamech in Moses 8:9.⁶⁷ Cassuto observes:⁶⁸

The curse on the ground — that is to say, the decree that the ground would not again produce of its own accord, without human labor, what was needed for man’s sustenance, and that he would eat his bread only with toil and the sweat of his face — remained valid, except that the Lord promised not to add thereto, that is, not to aggravate further man’s position on earth.

59 L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, p. 197. Cf. F. G. Martinez, *Genesis Apocryphon*, 10:13, p. 231; J. C. VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 6:2, p. 36; O. S. Wintermute, *Jubilees*, 6:2, p. 66.

60 C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 452.

61 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 59.

62 S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, pp. 115, 629.

63 *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116, 629.

64 See Leviticus 26:31; Amos 5:21-22.

65 Compare Moses 3:2.

66 See OVERVIEW Moses 8, p. 207; OVERVIEW Genesis 9, p. 298.

67 See COMMENTARY Moses 8:9-b, p. 224. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, COMMENTARY 4:23-b, p. 270.

68 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 120.

21 *And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for **the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.***

22 *While the earth remaineth, **seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.***

- c ***the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.*** Commenting on the Genesis version of this verse, Sarna writes: “As compared with Genesis 6:5, the language is considerably modified and is no longer all-inclusive. The statement is not a judgment but an observation that a proclivity for evil is woven into the fabric of human nature. The key phrase is ‘from his youth,’ not from birth or conception, implying that the tendency to evil may be curbed and redirected through the discipline of laws. Hence, the next section deals with the imposition of laws upon postdiluvian humanity.”⁶⁹
 - d ***neither will I again smite any more every thing living.*** Compare Isaiah 54:9: “I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth.”
- 22 a ***seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.*** This phrase articulates the re-establishment of the alternating rhythm of the times and seasons required to sustain agricultural life and the cultic calendar that goes along with it. The words “describe three environmental phenomena: agricultural, climatic, and temporal” — “the expression of totality by means of opposites.”⁷⁰

A revelation of Joseph Smith qualifies this promise as follows:⁷¹

I have asked of the Lord concerning His coming; and while asking the Lord, He gave a sign and said, “In the days of Noah I set a bow in the heavens as a sign and token that in any year that the bow should be seen the Lord would not come; but there should be seed time and harvest during that year: but whenever you see the bow withdrawn, it shall be a token that there shall be famine, pestilence, and great distress among the nations, and that the coming of the Messiah is not far distant.

69 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 59.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 60.

71 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 10 March 1844, pp. 340-341.

Endnotes

- G8-1** Compare with the gradual, reluctant departure of God from Jerusalem and its temple in Ezekiel.¹ Other Jewish sources likewise describe the similar process of the removal of the *Shekhinah* — representing God’s presence — in seven stages.² See also OVERVIEW Moses 7, p. 115.
- G8-2** Just prior to his equating of the rainbow and the staff as a “witness between me and my people,” Pseudo-Philo³ has it that the Lord showed Moses “the measures of the sanctuary, and the number of the offerings, and the sign whereby men shall interpret (literally, begin to look upon) the heaven, and said: These are the things which were forbidden to the sons of men because they sinned.”⁴
- G8-3** In mentioning the many parallels between Adam and Noah, the figure of Cain should also be brought into discussion.⁵ He is also a worker of the soil: we have Adam (created from the earth⁶) who works the earth.⁷ We have Cain who is a worker of the earth⁸ and then Noah who is a man of the earth.⁹ While there is no tree in this narrative, each of these three stories starts with a planting: the Tree of Knowledge has an analog to Cain’s crops and Noah’s vineyard. Moreover, the motif of knowledge is a part of each story. Adam knows good and evil after his Fall. Cain “knows not” where his brother is. Noah knows what his son does to him. Finally, we have three curses: the curse on the land, the curse on Cain, and the curse on Canaan. Cain failed to be another Adam, just as Canaan failed to be another Noah.

1 See T. D. Alexander, *From Eden*, pp. 56-57.

2 H. Schwartz, *Tree*, p. 51, cf. pp. 55-56). See also D. J. Larsen, Enoch and the City of Zion.

3 Pseudo-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities*, 19:12, pp. 130.

4 Cf. JST Exodus 34:1-2.

5 Thanks to Benjamin McGuire for bringing this point to our attention.

6 Moses 3:7.

7 Moses 3:5, 15.

8 Moses 5:17.

9 Genesis 9:20.