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III. The Structure and Message of Genesis (For more, see DeRouchie, “The Blessing-Commission, the Promised Offspring, and the *Toledot* Structure of Genesis,” *JETS* 56.2 [2013]: 219–47).

A. The Organizational Function of the *Toledot* Formula. The structure of Genesis is best determined by an alignment of form and content features, only the latter of which are followed in most surveys of the issue. Recognizable are the 10(11) *toledot* (“generations”) cycles, five of which lack a connector (i.e., they are asyndetic) and five of which are fronted by a *waw* conjunction (“and”), suggesting that the latter are intentionally linked to the book's sections that precede. The result is five distinct units in the book (i–v), and the most significant feature is that the Shem *toledot* is viewed not as a tag on the end of the primeval history but rather an intentionally placed genealogy pointing *forward* in the narrative to get us to Abraham.

Fig. 3.1. Genesis at a Glance

		<i>toledot Structure</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Outline</i>
		Preface. Biblical Worldview Foundations (1:1–2:3)		I. Preface. <i>The Blessing-Commission</i> : Humanity's Productive Kingdom-Purpose as God-Imagers (1:1–2:3) II. <i>The Need for Blessing</i> : Humanity's Perversion & the Merciful Kingdom Promise of a Curse-Overcoming Seed (2:4–4:26) III. <i>The Hope for Blessing</i> : Humanity's Merciful Preservation & Provision for Kingdom Blessing (5:1–50:26) A. <i>The Missional Blessing Renewed</i> (5:1–11:9) 1. The Perpetuation of Kingdom Hope from Adam to Noah in the Context of Threat (5:1–6:8) 2. The Promised Line's Protection & the Merciful Restoration of Humanity's Kingdom Purpose in the Context of Judgment (6:9–11:9) B. <i>The Agency for Blessing Declared</i> (11:10–50:26) 1. The Perpetuation of Kingdom Hope from Shem to Terah & the Merciful Provision for Universal Kingdom Blessing through Abraham & His Seed (11:10–37:1) 2. The Promised Line's Preservation & the Developing Kingdom Hope for a Royal Deliverer (37:2–50:26)
1	i	These are the <i>toledot</i> of the H and E (2:4–4:26)	N (+GL/S)	
2A	ii	This is the book of the <i>toledot</i> of Adam (5:1–6:8)	GL (+N)	
	iii	These are the <i>toledot</i> of Noah (6:9–9:29) And these are the <i>toledot</i> of Noah's Sons (10:1–11:9)	N GS (+N)	
2B	iv	These are the <i>toledot</i> of Shem (11:10–11:26) And these are the <i>toledot</i> of Terah (11:27–25:11) And these are the <i>toledot</i> of Ishmael (25:12–18) And these are the <i>toledot</i> of Isaac (25:19–35:29) And these are the <i>toledot</i> of Esau (36:1–8; 36:9–37:1)	GL N (+GS) GS N GS (+N+GS)	
		v	These are the <i>toledot</i> of Jacob (37:2–50:26)	N (+GS+N)
		KEY: N = Narrative; GL = Linear Genealogy; GS = Segmented Genealogy		
		Main Theme		
The means by which God's blessing-commission of kingdom advancement will be fulfilled in a cursed and perverted world is through an ever-expanding God-oriented, hope-filled, mission-minded community, climaxing in a single king in the line of promise who will perfectly reflect, resemble, and represent God and who will definitively overcome all evil, thus restoring right order to God's kingdom for the fame of his name.				

- B. The Parallel, Introductory Function of the Linear Genealogies.** Furthermore, a genealogical genre parallel between chs. 5 and 11 (the book's only linear genealogies, both addressing the line-of-promise) sets up two major units post-fall. As such, after the theological introduction to the book (1:1–2:3), we have the Garden episode (1), which clarifies both how life should be and why life is wrong. The rest of the book then clarifies the sustained need for universal blessing and the preservation of creation through judgment (2A) and the divine provision for the universal blessing (2B). These major units are highlighted on the basis of genre and content, whereas the individual section divisions and the units they fall under are distinguished by grammatical form (*and* vs. lack of it).
- C. The Main Theme:** The bulk of the literary weight in Genesis is given to the large unit from 11:10–37:1 that opens with the *toledot* of Shem and addresses the agency by which God's global kingdom purposes will be realized. I summarize the main theme of the book as follows: *The means by which God's blessing-commission of kingdom advancement will be fulfilled in a cursed and perverted world is through an ever-expanding God-oriented, hope-filled, mission-minded community, climaxing in a single king in the line of promise who will perfectly reflect, resemble, and represent God and who will definitively overcome all evil, thus restoring right order to God's kingdom for the fame of his name.*

IV. The Need for Blessing: Humanity's Perversion and the Merciful Kingdom Promise of a Curse-Overcoming Seed (Genesis 2:4–4:26)

A. Introduction:

1. Humanity in Gen. 1:1–2:23: The call to be an ever-expanding community of God-entranced families imaging God.

- Gen. 1:26–28. Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion...” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion...”
2. At the end of Gen. 1:1–2:3, what is clear is that males and females are:
 - a. Equal in their opportunity to relate to God;
 - b. Equal in their call to rule over God’s world;
 - c. Equal in their responsibility to image God in ever-increasing ways on a global scale;
 - d. Equal in their dependence on God to fulfill the mission;
 - e. Distinct in their gender;
 - f. Distinct in the role they will play in being fruitful, multiplying, and filling the earth with God’s image.

B. The Ideal Kingdom Family in the Sacred Space of God (Gen. 2:4–25)

1. Introduction:
 - a. The context is pre-fall and paradigmatic.
 - i. Stress on the pre-fall reality is set (1) by the stress in Gen 2:5–7 that man’s role as a ground worker among the wilderness plants of the field had not yet been established (see Gen 3:23) and (2) by the narrative itself, Genesis 3 coming after Genesis 2.
 - ii. That the material provides a pattern for later kingdom relationships is clear from the information found in the text itself and from the use of Genesis 2 later in Scripture. What God calls for of the first couple in many respects remains constant as a creation ordinance and is thus applicable throughout the age of the first creation in the kingdom community in general and in marriage in particular.
 - b. Marriage is the *Deed of God*: As is evident through Genesis 2, God as the initiator, creator, and guide of the kingdom family—“What . . . God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matt. 19:6; Mark 10:9).
 - c. Marriage is about the *Display of God*: Couples image God in a unique way.
 - Eph. 5:31–32. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.
 - (1) “Mystery”: something that has not been fully disclosed but now is being revealed in a greater way.
 - (2) The mystery of marriage is that since the beginning of creation (Mark 10:6) the institution has been a model of a greater, more ultimate relationship—i.e., a picture or symbol of the relationship between Christ and his church

Fig. 3.7. The Mystery of Marriage as the Display of God

Ultimate Relationship:	Christ (head) + church	=	one body
Model Relationship:	Husband (head) + wife	=	one flesh

2. Marriage as the display of God’s tenacious covenant love with his people
 - a. The man’s role (2:15): “to work it and keep it”

- i. Outside Genesis, these terms are used together only in relation to the Levites roles as *servants* and *guardians* in the tabernacle:
- Num. 3:4, 7–8. But Nadab and Abihu died before Yahweh when they offered unauthorized fire before Yahweh in the wilderness of Sinai... They [the Levites] shall keep guard over him [Aaron] and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle. They shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle. (See also Num. 3:4, 7–8; 8:26; 18:5–6; 1 Chr 23:32; Ezek 44:14.)
 - Gen. 3:23–24. Therefore Yahweh God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.
- ii. A number of inter-textual parallels suggest that Adam bore a priestly role, serving as overseer of God’s sacred space, the Garden of Eden being portrayed as his sanctuary/temple/palace on earth.
- (1) Yahweh God walks in Eden as he later does in the tabernacle (Gen. 3:8; cf. Lev. 26:12; Deut. 23:14[H15]; 2 Sam. 7:6–7)
 - (2) Eden and the later sanctuaries are entered from the east and guarded by cherubim (Gen. 3:24; cf. Exod. 26:22; 27:13; 38:13; 1 Kgs. 6:23–29)
 - (3) The tabernacle lamp stand’s almond-tree appearance possibly symbolizes the tree of life (Gen. 2:9; 3:22; cf. Exod. 25:31–35; 34:17–24), and its seven lights may point to the seven days of creation (Exod. 25:31–40).
 - (4) The pair of Hebrew verbs in God’s command to the man to “work/serve” and to “keep/guard” the Garden (2:15; 3:23–24) are only used in combination elsewhere in the Pentateuch of the duties of the Levites in the sanctuary (cf. Num. 3:7–8; 8:26; 18:5–6)
 - (5) The river flowing from Eden (Gen. 2:10) is echoed in Ezek. 47:1–12, which envisages a river flowing from a future Jerusalem temple and bringing life to the Dead Sea.
 - (6) Gold, onyx, and other precious stones (Gen. 2:11–12) are used extensively to decorate the later sanctuaries and priestly garments (Exod. 25:7, 11, 17, 31, 35; 27:48–50; 28:9–12, 17, 20–21; 31:5; 35:9, 27, 33; 38:24; 39:6, 7, 10, 13–14; 1 Kgs. 6:20–22, 28, 30, 32; 2 Chr. 3:5–7, 10). Gold in particular was associated with the divine presence.
 - (7) The descriptions of the tabernacle and Solomon’s temple are filled with garden imagery reminiscent of Eden (gourds, flowers, pomegranates, lilies, seas, oxen, lions, wreaths, clay) (Exod. 25:31–36; 28:33–34; 37:17–22; 39:24–26; 1 Kgs. 6:18, 29, 32, 35; 7:18–20, 22–26, 29–30, 36, 39, 42, 44, 46, 49; cf. Jer. 52:22–23; 2 Chr. 3–4).
 - (8) The 6+1 pattern of the creation appears to be modeled in the tabernacle instructions, where God initiates the building with seven speeches (paralleling the seven days), each beginning with

“Yahweh said to Moses” (25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12). The sixth speech sets apart two humans to oversee the building project (30:1–11), and the seventh calls Israel to keep the Sabbath (31:12–17).

iii. Interpretation of Adam’s role in Gen 2:15:

- (1) The activity:
 - (a) “Work” = Stewardship and provision; the leader as servant (unburdened “work,” cf. 3:17–19)
 - (b) “Keep” = Guardianship and protection; the leader as caretaker and watchman (cf. 3:24)
- (2) The object = *the garden*. Adam would operate as the primary agent for serving and guarding the garden, which would have included plants, animals, and his family. His ministry would have ever been done in light of the great commission to fill and subdue the whole earth as image bearers.

Fig. 3.8. Examples of Adam’s Role as Primary Provider and Protector

	Physical	Spiritual
Provider	Primary responsibility in labor for food, shelter, etc.	Primary responsibility for family instruction and worship.
Protector	Primary responsibility for ensuring wellbeing of family and dwelling.	Primary responsibility for guarding God’s word and standing against negative influences.

- b. The wife’s role / the man’s need (2:18): a helper corresponding to the husband.
 - i. The wife is called to stand alongside her husband to assist and enable him in his call as the primary provider and protector.
 - ii. The role of helper is not derogatory, for this role is most commonly associated with Yahweh in the OT.
 - Ps. 115:9–11. O Israel, trust in Yahweh! He is their *help* and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in Yahweh! He is their *help* and their shield. You who fear Yahweh, trust in Yahweh! He is their *help* and their shield.”
 - Ps. 121:1–2. I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my *help* come? My *help* comes from Yahweh, who made heaven and earth.
- c. Adam’s role clarified: love his wife as his own body with a shift of primary covenant loyalty from parents to spouse (2:23–24)
 - i. As is clear from the inference in 2:24, 2:23 marks the first wedding vows. More than a mere observation, these words provide a declaration from the man, the covenant head, to Yahweh (note he speaks of his wife in 3rd person “this”) that he would love his wife as he loves himself: “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (cf. Eph. 5:28).
 - ii. Covenant commitment seen in:
 - (1) “Bone and flesh” (v. 23): new covenant family created (see 2 Sam. 5:1)
 - (2) Naming (v. 23): new covenant partner (see 2 Kgs. 23:34; 24:17)

- (3) “Cleaving” (v. 24): new covenant commitment (see Gen. 34:3; cf. Ps. 45:10–12)
- d. Roles summarized
- i. Husband: Called to love through provision and protection (= Paul’s *headship*)
 - ii. Wife: Called to help (= Paul’s *submission*)

“Headship is the divine calling of a husband to Christ-like servant leadership—protection and provision—in the home. Submission is the divine calling of a wife to honor and affirm her husband’s leadership and to help carry it through according to her gifts.” (John Piper)

C. The Kingdom Family Warped: Reflections on the Fall in Light of the Ideal (Genesis 3):

1. The serpent’s goal and scheme: Role reversal (cf. 1 Tim. 2:14)
2. The man and woman’s actions:
 - a. The woman was deceived (Gen. 3:1–6; cf. 1 John 2:15–17) and led her husband, who was with her, into sin (Gen. 3:6); the man was passive, failing to protect his wife and to stand against the God-denying force of the serpent.
 - b. Rather than seeking justification from God, the man began to justify himself and abusively and selfishly pointed the blame on his wife, declaring her guilt and sentencing her to death (3:12; cf. 2:17).
 - c. The woman recognized the serpent’s deception (3:13).
3. The Judgment against the Woman/Wife (3:16)
 - a. Summary:
 - i. Pain in childbirth, the one area that the woman stands fully distinct from the man with respect to abilities; it targets the very means by which gospel hope will come and triumph (Gen 3:15 – hope will rise through judgment).
 - ii. Marital conflict and its resulting communal strife: Like the way sin desired to destroy Cain (Gen. 4:7), a wife’s desire will be to overpower her husband, but he will rule over her (3:16; see Song 7:11 for curse reversal).
 - b. Both judgments confront the wife’s responsibility as “helper.”
4. The Judgment against the Man/Husband (3:17–19)
 - a. Summary:
 - i. The reason for judgment emphasized (3:17): failure to love through servant-hearted leadership (no protection but rather passive following).
 - ii. Burdensome life and toilsome work (3:17–18)
 - iii. Deterioration of the body and of creation (3:19)
 - Rom. 8:18–25.²⁰The creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

- 2 Cor. 4:16. Though our outer man is wasting away, our inner man is being renewed day by day.
 - Rev. 22:1–3. Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.
- b. All target the man's responsibility as steward and leader
5. Synthesis of the Roles of Men and Women
- a. Growing up in a world that often had a low view of women, the Bible stresses the dignity and purpose of women and emphasizes the responsibility of a man to treat a lady with honor and care, nurture and respect.
- b. Husbands and wives are equal in nature and purpose and have nearly all the same abilities, but they do have different roles.
- c. Both roles are sacrificial, self-giving, and other-exalting.
- i. Headship is never domineering, manipulative, coercive, passive, or destructive; rather it is protective, caring, nurturing, intentional, and supportive; the husband is the leader in the home, serving as the primary provider and protector, both physically and spiritually.
- ii. Helper-ship is never domineering, manipulative, coercive, passive, or destructive; rather it is characterized by honoring and respecting one's husband, by a heart of service, and by a genuine contribution to the two-person team that provides balance to the husband's strengths and weaknesses.

D. The Nature of Sin, the First Gospel, and the Investiture and Exile of Mankind (Genesis 3)

1. The Setting and Promise
- a. Two trees:
- i. The tree of life (2:9), the eating of which was related to eternal life (3:22, 24; cf. Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19).
- ii. The tree of the knowledge related to good and evil (2:9, 17), suggesting the acquisition of *wisdom* and god-likeness (3:5–6, 22).
- b. The command: Don't eat from the tree of the knowledge related to good and evil (2:16–17; 3:5).
- c. The consequence:
- i. Of disobedience: death (2:17), leading to a shameful knowledge of good and evil gained the wrong way (3:22);
- ii. Of obedience (implied): life sustained, not gained (though likely escalated), and a knowledge of good and evil acquired in God's time and way (see 3:22).
2. The Test or Evidence of Human Inability: The Tree of Knowledge
- a. Central Texts in the Immediate Context:
- Gen. 2:17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.
 - Gen. 3:5. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

- Gen. 3:22. Then Yahweh God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.”
- b. Question: Is the “knowledge” pertaining to good and evil something mankind was supposed to have in time, or is it a knowledge only God was to have (3:5, 22)?
- i. Kings are called upon to make judicial decisions regarding right and wrong, under the guidance of God; they are to know good and evil, but only as God defines it.
 - (1) Key texts:
 - 2 Sam. 14:17, 20. And your servant thought, ‘The word of my lord the king will set me at rest,’ for my lord the king is like the angel of God *to discern good and evil*. Yahweh your God be with you!...But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth.
 - 1 Kgs. 3:9. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may *discern between good and evil*, for who is able to govern this your great people?
 - (2) Conclusion: Israel’s kings discern good and evil, right and wrong, but they do so solely with God’s help *through* the Word (see Deut. 17:18–20).
 - ii. Young children have no knowledge of good or evil and thus are fully dependent on those older for discernment.
 - (1) Key texts:
 - Deut. 1:39. And as for your little ones, who you said would become a prey, and your children, who today have *no knowledge of good or evil*, they shall go in there. And to them I will give it, and they shall possess it.
 - Isa. 7:15–16. He shall eat curds and honey *when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good*. For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.
 - (2) Conclusion: At least after the fall, young children cannot distinguish good and evil, but adults can. Gaining the ability to choose the right from the wrong does not appear to be a bad thing but is expected to come with maturity.
 - iii. There is a point at which the elderly fail to appreciate fully what others consider good and evil.
 - 2 Sam. 19:35[36]. I am this day eighty years old. *Can I discern what is pleasant and what is not* [lit., between good to evil]? Can you servant taste what he eats or what he drinks? Can I still listen to the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king?
 - iv. Those who mature under God are to distinguish good from evil and to choose good as defined by God.
 - (1) Key texts:
 - Jer. 4: 22. “For my people are foolish; they know me not; they are stupid children; they have no understanding. *They are ‘wise’ in doing evil! But how to do good they know not.*”
 - Heb. 5:13–14. For everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice *to distinguish good from evil*.

- Rom. 16:19–20. For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be *wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil*. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
- (2) Conclusion: God’s people are to be characterized by a wisdom that knows and does what is good in light of their close association with God.
- v. Synthesis:
- (1) Knowledge of good and evil involves discernment and value assessment, whether moral, aesthetic, sensual, etc.
 - (2) At the highest level, within the context of the created world, God alone bears the right to determine what is good and what is evil, what is right and what is wrong, what is beautiful and what is not. He is the ultimate standard upon which good and evil is weighed.
 - (3) Like children, Adam and Eve did not know the difference between good and evil before the fall, though the way the language is used elsewhere suggests that they were in time to gain such knowledge. Through the tree, they were to learn that good is related to what God says to do and evil to what he does not permit.
 - (4) Like the rulers of old who stood as representatives of God to the people, Adam and Eve (and all humans that follow) were to submit to God’s leadership, aligning all knowledge of right and wrong to God’s directives.
- c. Defining sin in light of the fall: Any motivation, action, or thought that fails to align with God’s definition of what is good; failure to trust God’s timing and way.
- Rom. 14:23. Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.
 - 1 John 3:4. Everyone who make a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.
 - Jas. 4:17. Whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.
3. The Serpent, His Curse, and the First Gospel (3:1–19)
- a. “The serpent’s” identity:
 - i. The serpent personifies sin, death, and hostility to God and is related to what is evil rather than to what is wise and good.
 - Rom. 16:19–20. I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. ²⁰The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
 - ii. He was created by God.
 - Gen. 3:1. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field *that Yahweh God had made*.
 - Col. 1:16. For by [Jesus] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him (cf. Col. 2:15; Eph. 6:12).
 - iii. The book of Revelation asserts that the serpent is the devil, whom God will destroy along with all evil powers.
 - Rev. 12:1–4, 9, 13, 17. And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. ²She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of

giving birth. ³And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. ⁴His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it.... ⁹And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.... ¹³And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.... ¹⁷Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

iv. Revelation appears to build off of OT texts that link evil with a dragon-like figure and that themselves at least parallel similar views from the ancient world (as noted by R. Averbeck):

- Isa. 27:1. In that day Yahweh with his hand and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan (Heb. *lwytn* = Ug. *ltn*) the fleeing (Heb. *brh* = Ug. *brh*) serpent, Leviathan the twisting (Heb. *ʿqltwn* [only here in OT] = Ug. *ʿqltn*) serpent, and he will slay the dragon (Heb. *tnnyn*) that is in the sea (Heb. *ywm*; cf. Ug. god *yamm*).
- Ps. 74:12–14. Yet God my King is from of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. ¹³You divided the sea by your might; you broke the heads of the sea monsters (Heb. *tnnynym*; cf. singular *tnnyn* in Isa 27:1) on the waters. ¹⁴You crushed (Heb. *ršš*) the heads (Heb. *rʿš*) of Leviathan (Heb. *lwytn*); you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.
- The Baal Epic (Ugaritic).

<i>ktmḥš.ltn.btn.brh</i>	When you smote Lôtan, the fleeing serpent
<i>tkly.btn.ʿqltn.[-]</i>	finish off the twisted serpent
<i>šlyt.d.šbʿt.rašm</i>	the tyrant with seven heads.

b. The curse against the serpent and the first gospel (3:14–15):

- i. Genesis 3:14 suggests that the judgment on Satan, ultimately brought about by Christ, is due to what he did in deceiving the first couple: “Because you have done this. . . .” (NOTE: In contrast to popular opinion, Satan’s “fall” is most likely *not* described in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, for these texts find their primary referent in the kings of Babylon and Tyre, respectively, and they portray them as following in the steps of *Adam*, not Satan.)
- ii. Identity of the “Seed of the Serpent”: Human offspring who are spiritually linked with the serpent, characterized by hostility toward God and his kingdom building efforts.
 - (1) The curse is not against snakes but against demonic power and evil that pervades and influences this world.
 - (2) The rest of Genesis distinguishes two human family trees, one characterized by the honor of God and hope in God’s promise and the other characterized by hostility toward God and his kingdom-building plan. This distinction works alongside the genealogical-*toledot* structure of the book to suggest that the primary line makes up the descendants of the *woman*, from which the offspring of promise will come, whereas the secondary group makes up the offspring of the serpent.

- (a) The primary human line of promise is highlighted in the narratives and signaled through narrated *linear genealogies*: A gave birth to B, B gave birth to C, C gave birth to D, etc.; cf. 5:1–32; 11:10–26).
- (b) The secondary human line of antagonists is usually highlighted through discontinuous *segmented genealogies*: A gave birth to B, C, and D; B gave birth to E, F, and G; C gave birth to H, I, J; D gave birth to K, L, and M; cf. 10:1; 2:12; 36:1, 9). This group marks the ultimate mission field to which Israel is called by God to serve.
- (3) The NT suggests humans are either children of God or children of the devil.
- Matt 13:37–39. [Jesus] answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. *The weeds are the sons of the evil one*, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels.”
 - Matt 23:15, 33. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much *a child of hell* as yourselves. . . . ³³ You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?
 - John 8:33, 44. They answered [Jesus], “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free?’ . . . ⁴⁴[Jesus answered,] “*You are of your father the devil*, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and his nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”
 - Acts 13:8–10. But Elymas the magician . . . opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ⁹ But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him, ¹⁰ and said, “*You son of the devil*, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?”
 - 1 John 3:8–11. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. ⁹No one born of God makes a practice of sinning because he has been born of God. ¹⁰By this it is evident *who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil*: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. ¹¹For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.
- iii. The “seed of the woman” and the first gospel (3:15)
- (1) *In the wake of humanity’s fall, God declared the first good news even before his judgment of the woman and man*: the offspring of the woman would one day bring a death-blow against the serpent (“bruise your head”) while sustaining injury to himself (“bruise his heel”) (cf. Rom. 16:20; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 20:1–3, 10).
- (2) *Identity of the seed*: an individual, male, royal descendant of the woman

- (a) The explicit 3ms pronoun “he” and 3ms pronominal suffix “his” in the Hebrew text point to a single, male descendant.
- (i) When the collective singular noun “seed,” “denotes a specific descendant, it appears with singular verb inflections, adjectives, and pronouns”; in contrast, when the co-referent is plural, it uses plural inflections, adjectives, and pronouns (see J. Collins, “A Syntactical Note [Genesis 3:15]” *TynBul* 140 [1997]: 139–48; J. S. DeRouchie and J. C. Meyer, “Christ or Family as the ‘Seed’ of Promise? An Evaluation of N. T. Wright on Galatians 3:16,” *SBJT* 14.3 [2010]: 36–48).
- (ii) Genesis 17:9 provides an example where the co-referent is plural, and the text uses plural pronouns: “And God said, ‘As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout *their* generations.’”
- (b) The LXX translator appears to have interpreted it as an individual, for he used the ms pronoun (*autos*), rather than the neuter.
- (c) Eve appears to be hoping for the promised offspring when Cain is born. This hope is rekindled then with Seth, while Cain is portrayed as being separated from the offspring of the woman.
- Gen. 4:1, 25. Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten a man with the help of Yahweh.”... ²⁵And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, “God has appointed for me another *offspring* instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.”
- (d) Noah’s father Lamech appears to be hoping for this male descendant, for when Noah is born he declares: “Out of the ground that Yahweh has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands” (Gen. 5:29).
- (3) *Further support for a Messianic reading of Genesis 3:15*
- (a) God promises Abraham (and others) that kings would come from him and that, while he would have many offspring, a single, male offspring of promise would overpower his enemies and serve as the channel of blessing to all the nations of the earth (Gen. 12:2; 17:6; 22:17b–18; 24:60; 35:11)
- Gen. 22:17–18. I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of *his* enemies, ¹⁸and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.
- (b) God promises that this king would be one of Jacob’s sons from the tribe of Judah, from line of David, and he affirms that he would defeat his enemies and mediate blessing.

- Gen. 49:8, 10. Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you....¹⁰The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute come to him [[or "until he comes to whom it belongs"]]; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
 - Num. 24:17, 19. I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth....¹⁹And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of the cities!
 - 2 Sam. 7:12–13. When your days [David] are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.¹³He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.
 - Ps. 72:1, 4, 9, 17. Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son! ...⁴May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and *crush the oppressor*....⁹May desert tribes bow down before him, and his enemies, *lick the dust!* ...¹⁷May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! *May people be blessed in him*, all nations call him blessed!
- (c) Luke explicitly links the Genesis promises to Abraham with the hope of the Davidic Messiah and Isaiah's Messianic Servant.
- Luke 1:68–75. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us;⁷² to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant,⁷³ the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us⁷⁴ that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
 - Acts 3:25–26. You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed."²⁶ God, having raised up his servant [Jesus], sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of your from your wickedness.
- (d) Paul too saw Genesis' promises as being mediated through Messiah Jesus, the seed of Abraham.
- Gal. 3:8, 14, 16, 29. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." ...¹⁴ In Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham ... [has] come to the Gentiles....¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ....²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

4. Mankind's Investiture and Exile (3:20–24)

- a. The shift from nakedness to clothing parallels humanity's move from ignorance (developmental childhood) to wisdom (developmental adulthood) or lack of knowledge to knowledge. The clothing, therefore, appears to suggest maturity beyond infancy and perhaps even endowment with royal privilege (see W. N. Wilder, "Illumination and Investiture: the Royal Significance of the Tree of Wisdom in Genesis 3," *WTJ* 68 [2006]: 51–69).
- i. There is no reason to think that clothing was not part of God's original intention for humanity. Nakedness without shame (Gen. 2:25) likely points more to the first couples' immaturity rather than to their blamelessness. (Children feel no shame at their nakedness, but only because their eyes have not been opened to their need for clothing.)
 - ii. Adam and Eve's clothing is likely a means for royal honor and proper reverence in the presence of God—much like the priestly garments, which were "for glory and for beauty" (Exod. 28:2, 40, 42).
 - (1) Throughout Scripture, as in the ancient Near East, clothing accompanies rulership and inheritance (cf. Joseph [Gen. 37:3–4; 41:42]; Samson [Judg. 14:12–19]; Jonathan, son of Saul [1 Sam. 18:4]; Jehoiachim [Jer. 22:24]; Jehoiachin [2 Kgs. 25:29]; Daniel [Dan. 5:29]; Joshua, the high priest [Zech. 3:3–7]; Zerubbabel [Hag. 2:23]; and Mordecai [Esth. 6:6–11; 8:2, 8]; the prodigal son [Luke 15:22]).
 - (2) Throughout Scripture, nakedness, apart from the marriage bed, is always a shameful, undesirable state.
 - Lev. 18:6. None of you shall approach any one of his close relatives to uncover nakedness. I am Yahweh.
 - Isa. 47:3. Your nakedness shall be uncovered, and your disgrace shall be seen. I will take vengeance, and I will spare no one.
 - Nah. 3:5. Behold, I am against you, declares Yahweh of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will make nations look at your nakedness and kingdom at your shame.
 - Hab. 2:15–16. Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink—you pour out your wrath and make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness!
¹⁶You will have your fill of shame instead of glory. Drink, yourself, and show your uncircumcision! The cup in Yahweh's right hand will around to you, and utter shame will come upon your glory!
 - Rev. 16:15. Blessed is the one who says awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!
 - iii. In the ancient world, both kings and idols alike, as images of the gods, were expected to be clothed as a sign and mark of their royal authority.
 - Jer. 10:3–15 summarized. One begins with the wooden core of the statue (v. 3), plates it then with gold or silver (vv. 4a, 9a, 14), attaches it to its base (v. 4b), and then, finally, clothes the image in fine garments (v. 9b): "They are the work of the craftsman and of the hands of the goldsmith; their clothing is violet and purpose; they are all the work of skilled men."
 - Ezek. 16 summarized. God clothed his bride in royal adornments (vv. 10–12), but she removed them and placed them on idolatrous pseudo-images of god instead (vv. 17–18): "And [you] made images of men, and with them played the whore. ¹⁸And you took your embroidered garments to cover *them*."
 - Isa. 44 summarized. Whereas Israel engaged in idolatry, *forming* (*ysr*) idols that were ultimately worthless (v. 9), God had *formed* (*ysr*) Israel in his image, and

he would not forget them: “Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I *formed* you; you are my servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.”

- iv. Because the ancients believed kings were images of the gods, they were expected to be clothed with the glory and majesty of God. In Wilder’s words, “The completion and fulfillment of their rulership demands investiture” (63). But Adam and Eve did not pass their “test,” seeking knowledge prematurely, and they therefore failed to receive the kind of divine investiture that would have been theirs otherwise.
- v. The amazing grace of the passage is that, in spite of Adam and Eve’s sin, God does not cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden naked but instead clothes them with garments, symbolizing their receipt of a small token of their inheritance as children of God (Gen. 3:21). The use of animal skins may even suggest that the blessing from God only came through substitutionary sacrifice. Regardless, it seems that their investiture was much less than the royal and glorious event that it “could have been” had they obeyed, and it therefore anticipates the day when the last Adam, serving as a royal priest (Exod 19:16) and through his own obedience, secures for all in him the glory and righteousness of God.
 - 1 Cor. 15:53. This perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.
 - 2 Cor. 5:4. While we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.
 - Rev. 3:5. The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life.
- b. “Death” as judgment for sin:
 - i. Adam and Eve’s “death” is most directly *exile* from God’s life-giving presence, both physically and spiritually (Gen. 3:23–24)—a death that ultimately results in greater sin and destructive behavior, working through Cain and climaxing in the need for the flood. Sin, therefore, does not simply deserve judgment—it is judgment. In the words of Paul, “God gave them up . . .” (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28).
 - ii. Death was also seen in God’s subjecting creation “to frustration” and into a “bondage to corruption” (Rom. 8:20–21). What was natural and ordered became twisted, so that storms could be destructive and cells could become cancerous. This “death” judgment appears to have impacted all creation in light of the curse brought on land animals (Gen. 3:14) and the thorns and thistles brought forth from the earth (3:18).
 - iii. The result was that death also included physical deterioration, as is clear from the judgment on Adam that his earthly toil would ultimately end in his return to the ground as dust (Gen. 3:19) and from the statement that the first couple were separated from eternal life (3:22, 24).
 - iv. The new creation in Christ answers each of these results of the curse:

- (1) While death reigned over all in Adam, life comes to those in Christ (Rom. 5:17). Though believers still battle sin, our once “debased mind” (1:28) is now being renewed (12:2), as God “gives us up” to obedience, having freed us from slavery to sin (6:17) and giving us the gift of eternal life (6:23).
 - (2) While Christians still get cancer and other diseases in this cursed age, we rest in the promise of “the redemption of our bodies” (Rom. 8:23), and “though our outer self is wasting away, our inner man is being renewed day by day” as we await “an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison” (2 Cor. 4:16–17).
 - (3) While those in Christ still die physically, the sting of death has been removed (2 Cor. 15:55–57), and physical death becomes the means to glorification in the presence of God. What hope we have that “to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21), that “to depart” is to “be with Christ” (1:23), and that to “be away from the body” is to be “at home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8).
- c. The hope of life: Significantly, Adam names his wife Eve, which means “mother of all the living.” This name is one of amazing hope, for Adam was convinced both from the gospel promise of Gen 3:15 regarding the offspring of the woman and the curse of painful birth in Gen 3:16 that life would rise out of judgment. Eve’s name is likely not referring to all humans who would come from her. As stated in Gen 3:15, some of her children would be considered *not* her offspring but offspring of the devil. She is the mother of the living—those who, by following the promised offspring deliverer would be ransomed from the serpent’s death line and grow up in the line of those hoping in the offspring deliverer.

E. Mankind’s Corruption and the Preservation of a Remnant (4:1–26)

1. Eve’s profession in 4:1 bears a sense of hope in echo of 3:15. She is looking for the offspring deliverer and thinks that Cain is it.
2. Cain carries the line of curse (4:16–24).
3. Seth gives hope for blessing, calling attention once again to the promise of a conquering offspring in the place of Abel (4:25–26).
 - a. Use of the divine name in the narrative:
 - i. “God”: Gen. 1:1–2:3
 - ii. “Yahweh God”: 2:4–3:24
 - iii. “Yahweh”: 4:1–26, except v. 25
 - iv. “God”: 4:25, with apparent focus on the Creator’s blessing (cf. 1:28).
 - b. Echoes of 4:26: “At that time people began to call upon the name of Yahweh.”
 - Joel 2:31-32. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of Yahweh comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh shall be saved.
 - Acts 2:21, 38-39. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

- Rom. 10:12–13. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

V. The Hope for Blessing: The Missional Blessing Renewed (5:1–11:9)

A. Structure:

1. 5:1–6:8: Whereas the last unit ended with an extended history of the “line of destruction” (4:1–24) and a small comment on the “line of promise” (4:25–26), this section focuses principally on the line of promise through an extended linear genealogy from Adam to Noah (5:1–32); brief comment is then made regarding the vast scope of the line of destruction and God’s wrath against the world (6:1–7). The final word, however, is hope (the mention of Noah’s favor with God, 6:8), just as was the case with both previous sections (2:1–3; 4:25–26).
2. 6:9–11:9:
 - a. 6:9–9:29: This extended narrative highlights the wickedness of all terrestrial life seen in violence (mankind, animals, and birds), God’s global judgment and gracious preservation of a remnant on the ark, God’s gracious covenant renewal with creation through Noah in spite of the sustained wickedness of mankind, and the setting apart of Shem as the line through whom the promise of Genesis 3:15 will continue.
 - b. 10:1–11:9: An extended segmented genealogy and narrative overviewing the growth and separation of the seventy nations following the Tower of Babel, all in order to highlight the need for divine blessing and the mission field to which God’s people will ultimately be called to reach.

B. The Perpetuation of Kingdom Hope from Adam through Noah in the Context of Threat (5:1–6:8)

1. An Unbroken Line of Faithful (Gen 5). Genesis 5 is dominated by a linear, apparently unbroken genealogy that carries the promised line descendant by descendant from Adam to Noah.
 - a. The previous unit ended by shifting focus away from the seed of the serpent in Cain to the offspring of promise in Seth (4:26): “To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of Yahweh.” This sets the stage for the linear genealogy of ch. 5, which only highlights how the Messianic hope was preserved from generation to generation.
 - b. “Image and likeness” language is shown to point to “sonship,” Adam of God and Seth of Adam (5:1–3; cf. Luke 3:38). In some way, image-ness relates to family resemblance.
 - c. Little commentary is offered through the genealogy, suggesting that the point is to move us to Noah. Focus is brought to the 7th and 10th generations by the comment that “Enoch walked with God” (5:22, 24), and in Lamech’s declaration at the birth of Noah (5:29): “Out of the ground that Yahweh has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.” The messianic hope, therefore, was passed on through the generations.
 - d. Because the only extended ages in the Bible are connected to the line of promise in Genesis’ linear genealogies, it is possible that *only* the righteous

remnant were living long, perhaps as a prophetic sign of the miracle of *life* that Yahweh alone could provide. In this view, old age would bear a missiological purpose until God raised up Abraham, through whom the messianic mission to the nations gained greater focus.

- e. The fact that every generation (except Enoch) *died* stresses the permanent hold of the curse on humanity. God's promise in 2:17 is proving true, and the weight of this curse is highlighted in Lamech's final cry for relief (5:29).
 - f. The linear genealogy ends segmented, highlighting that Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth (5:32). The arrangement highlights Shem, even though the genealogy in Genesis 10 suggests that Japheth may have been the oldest. The mention that the "youngest son" uncovered Noah's nakedness (9:24) probably points to Canaan as the youngest (grandson) in the household rather than to Ham as the youngest.
2. Narrative on the Line of Destruction (6:1–8):
- a. 6:1–4: This text is notoriously difficult. Who are the "sons of God" who took the "daughters of man" as their wives? Who are the Nephilim? Why is this information given at this point in the narrative?
 - i. The "sons of gods/God":
 - (1) *Ancient kings who marry commoners.*
 - (a) Some believe that we have here a stress on man-centered kingdoms producing "the men of renown." In this reading, the "sons of gods/God" are royal figures (comparable to the Davidic king being called God's "son," 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7) and the "daughters of men" are any women.
 - (b) The sin may thus have been polygamy and/or a failure to exalt God through the household. However, we never see the phrase "*sons of god*" in the plural ever designating human kings.
 - (2) *The godly line that intermarries with pagans.*
 - (a) Genesis focuses highly on genealogy, distinguishing the line hoping in the "offspring" promise (Gen 3:15 + the linear genealogies) from the rebel line identified as "offspring" of the serpent. Coming at the climax of the 10-person linear genealogy from Adam to Noah in Genesis 5, the "sons of god" could easily be seen as the line of the faithful remnant that married the "daughters of men."
 - (b) However, if they were godly, would they really be intermarrying with pagans?
 - (c) Furthermore, why would the *human* remnant be dissociated from "men," for they were themselves hoping in the "offspring of the woman," who was named "the mother of all the living" (Gen 3:15, 20)?
 - (3) *Angels who intermarry with humans.*
 - (a) It is noteworthy that the phrase "sons of gods/God" in the plural is only used of angels throughout the Old Testament

- (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; see also Ps. 29:1; Dan. 3:25; cf. Deut. 32:8), though believers are regarded by this language in the NT (Matt. 5:9; Luke 20:36; Rom. 8:14, 19; Gal. 3:26).
- (b) Furthermore, it seems likely that both 2 Pet. 2:4–5 and Jude 6–7 are pointing to this text and referring to the sinful cohabitation of fallen angels with humans. 2 Pet 2:4–5 associate an angelic rebellion with the days of Noah (just as the sin’s of Sodom and Gomorrah are then associated with the days of Lot in vv. 6–7). Jude 6–8 detail that this fall related to *sexual immorality!*
- (i) 2 Pet. 2:4–5. For if God did not spare **angels** when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;⁵ if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved **Noah**, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;
- (ii) Jude 6–8: And the **angels** who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—⁷ just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, **which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire**, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.⁸ Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones.
- (c) Certainly Moses and Israel had a framework for the angelic (see Deut 32:8, 43; cf. 32:16–17), and because he authored Genesis we need to read that book through the lens of what follows. Furthermore, having introduced the creation of *all* things in heaven and earth in Gen 1:1 (the heavenly realm of which was understood to include the angels, Ps 148) and having introduced the serpent in Gen 3, it is not beyond possibility that the “sons of God” in Genesis 6 could point to the angels and not to the godly line from Adam to Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Many like Meredith Kline argue that the divine plural “us” in texts like Gen 1:26 and 3:22 points to God *and his angelic court*, which adds support to the possibility that “the sons of god” in 6:1–4 could refer to *angels*.
- (d) Jesus states that “angels in heaven do not marry” (Mark 12:25), but this does not restrict the possibility that fallen angels on earth could not. We see angelic beings portrayed as males (e.g., Michael, Jude 9) and *called* women (Zech

- 5:9), which suggests that angels too have distinct sexes/genders and that there are features on angelic beings that help us distinguish the two.
- (4) Regardless of how one understands the unions, the offspring were still considered human (Gen. 6:3–4), and it is this human population whose wickedness “was great on the earth,” and whose “every intention of the thoughts of his hearts was only evil continually” (6:5).
- ii. The Nephilim:
- (1) The meaning of Nephilim is difficult; it is related to the participial form of the verb *npl* ‘to fall’ and thus on the surface appears to mean “fallen ones.” This would suggest that we are perhaps to read them negatively—as self-made “men of renown.” However, the phrase translated “men of renown” actually says “the men of *the* name,” which, in light of Gen. 4:26 (“At that time people began to call on the name of Yahweh”) could mean that the Nephilim were God-seekers, perhaps even those listed in the linear genealogy of ch. 5 and thus in the line of Noah.
- (2) While some perceive the Nephilim to be the result of the unnatural unions cited above, the text itself renders this unlikely, for the Nephilim appear to have already been on the earth when the marriages happened and they continued to be afterward, which probably means not that they outlived the flood but that they lived through the period of the unnatural unions (Gen. 6:4). Furthermore, because the Nephilim are the subject of the first clause in 6:4 and because the offspring of the unnatural unions are only part of the subordinate clause, the explication statement regarding “the mighty men who were of old, the men of the name” at the end of the verse most likely refers to the Nephilim and not the offspring.
- (3) Num. 13:22, 28, 33 identifies the giant figures in Canaan as the Nephilim, but the text may be corrupt at this point. If Moses is intentionally linking the Nephilim of Canaan to the Nephilim of Genesis 6, it would mean either that the term is just general for “great men of stature or renown” or that this particular group of individuals somehow lived through the flood, perhaps being identified with Noah’s family.
- (4) What appears clear is that the narrator does not want the reader to blame the flood on the Nephilim. They were not the focus of the problem, but the corruption related to mankind’s perversions was.
- (5) Intriguingly, if the ancient Nephilim from the days of Noah are indeed connected in some way to the Nephilim of Canaan (even analogically), Moses may have been combatting those in his day that were asserting the Nephilim were non-human and thus superior to humans. His point here in relation to Numbers would be to stress that the Nephilim were *not* the offspring of these

angelic-human relations but were mere humans alive before and during the days of Noah, yet who also died under God's able judgment. It could also mean that the Nephilim were linked with Noah and/or one or more of his sons (see the connection of Gen 6:5 and 8:21), for the Nephilim continued through the global flood and through the Tower of Babel event. Israel should not fear the Nephilim in Canaan, for as in the days of the flood, he was able to put an end to all evil. They needed only to believe (Num. 14:11).

- b. 6:5–7: God is grieved at the wickedness of mankind, and the rebel majority are consigned to destruction by flood.
 - c. 6:8: The last word is one of hope—the lone remnant member is Noah, who “found favor/grace in the eyes of Yahweh.” Significantly, this statement of Noah finding grace *precedes* the statement of his righteousness (6:9), thus clarifying how it was that he stood out from his peers—it was all by grace. This is supported by the reaffirmation of mankind's complete wickedness after the flood—that is, the flood judgment did not alter humanity's hearts (8:21). This too suggests that Noah's “righteousness” is declarative and enjoyed by faith.
3. Moses's Intention? Why would Moses recount these events for the benefit of the Israelites who have so recently become a people under God?
 - a. Center-stage are themes of failure to keep Yahweh foremost in one's affections and of moral rebellion and its resulting divine punishment.
 - b. As with the flood generation, the Canaanites in Israel's day are being dispossessed because of misplaced affections and moral rebellion; it is “because of the wickedness of these nations that Yahweh is driving them out before you” (Deut. 9:4).
 - c. If Israel forgets Yahweh like the flood generation and like the Canaanites they are dispossessing, God will judge them as well (Deut. 8:19–20): “And if you forget Yahweh your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. Like the nations that Yahweh makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of Yahweh your God (cf. Lev. 18:24–25).

C. The Promised Line's Protection and the Merciful Restoration of Humanity's Kingdom Purpose in the Context of Judgment (6:9–11:9)

1. The Flood Judgment Anticipated (6:1–7:5):
 - a. The setting and its message for Israel (6:9–12)
 - i. Noah is righteous and blameless and walks with God (6:9–10; cf. 7:1 with 15:6 and 17:1–2)—statements only understood rightly in light of the “grace” of God mentioned in 6:8. This stress highlights that Noah had a long-relationship with God before the Lord ever established his covenant with him.
 - ii. The earth is corrupt due to the violence of “all flesh” (Gen 6:11–13), which appears not only to point to human sin but also to the ravenous and predatorial nature of beasts and birds (see 6:19–20; 7:21). SIDE

NOTE: If the violence of animals that is being judged refers to any type of ravenous or predatory activity, this text would serve as a caution to old-earthers, whose models require millions of years of animal suffering and death disassociated from the curse, as if animal violence is not worthy of a curse. However, it is possible that the violence being condemned is specifically violence done *against* mankind, and therefore pre-fall animal violence would not by nature be a problem.

- iii. God later stressed that Israel (the original audience of the written account of Genesis 6 in its present context) was not receiving the land because of their righteousness, for they were stubborn, but because of the wickedness of the nations they were disinheriting (Deut. 9:4–6). As such, Israel would likely have been forced to identify themselves with the world that was being destroyed rather than with Noah, who “walked with God” and “was a righteous man, blameless in his generation” (Gen. 6:9). Furthermore, as highlighted, the apparent disassociation of the Nephilim from the cause of the flood in 6:1–4 may have cautioned Israel from pointing to the giants as those who caused their wilderness judgment.
- b. The divine response (6:13–22)
 - i. Divine promise and command (6:13–21)
 - (1) Prediction judgment (6:13)
 - (2) Commands for Noah to build the ark (6:14–16)
 - (3) Promise of deliverance and covenant through judgment (6:17–21)
 - ii. Noah’s obedience (6:22; cf. 12:1–4)
- 2. Biblical Evidence for a *Global*, not Regional, Flood and Why Its Important:
 - a. Because the flood is targeted against the “corruption” and “violence” of “all flesh” (6:12–13), and because “all flesh” in the context appears to include not only mankind but also the land animals and birds (6:19–20; 7:21), the judgment would need to cover all the earth’s dry ground to destroy all terrestrial life, save those on the ark.
 - b. That Yahweh intended to destroy all the birds (save those on the ark) is highlighted from the very fact that the text highlights numerous times that a remnant of every kind of bird to be on the ark and that all the rest of the birds died. Birds could easily fly to higher ground if the flood was regional; however, if indeed “the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered” (7:19), the birds would need to be preserved.
 - i. God set forth to “blot out...man and animals and creeping things and *birds of the heavens*” (6:7).
 - ii. “Every living thing of all flesh” was to be preserved—“two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you” (6:19). These included “the birds according to their kinds” (6:20).
 - iii. Noah was instructed to bring “seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of the earth” (7:3). Why would the ark be needed as a sanctuary if their was

- indeed regions on the planet that had not been affected by the flood; the birds could have flown there.
- iv. Noah heeded God, taking onto the ark even “birds” (7:8)—“every bird, according to its kind” (7:14).
 - v. “And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. . . . He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.” (7:21, 23).
- c. A more narrow perspective from Noah’s viewpoint only ensues in 8:5; prior to this the language of the narrative is global.
 - d. Importance? The biblical text’s stress on the global nature of the flood that kills every terrestrial being is designed to highlight (1) how the deluge was a complete de-creation and (2) how the Noahic covenant marks a full-blown recreation on a global scale. What God is doing with Noah is truly a renewal of what he started, and Noah is indeed a second Adam.
3. Structure and Chronology of the Flood Narrative and Purpose of the Flood (7:5–24) (adapted from William D. Barrick, “Noah’s Flood and Its Geological Implications,” in *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, ed. Terry Mortenson and Thayne H. Ury [Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008], 251–81):
 - a. Structure and chronology
 - i. Introduction (7:6–10)
 - ii. Section 1 (7:11–18): Days 1–40—the ark floats after 40 days of water (fountains of great deep + torrential rains) (7:12, 17)
 - iii. Section 2 (7:19–8:4): Days 1–150—all living things outside the ark are destroyed (7:19–23)
 - Day 150 the waters begin to subside as fountains of the deep and torrential rains are shut up (7:24–8:3).
 - Day 151 the ark comes to rest on Mount Ararat (8:4)
 - iv. Section 3 (8:5–12): Days 151–305 (165 days): restore the earth to a livable condition (cf. 1:2–19)—Commencement of subsiding waters; ark grounded; raven and dove released; dove does not return
 - v. Conclusion (8:13–14): Days 306–371 (56 additional days): Ground surface free of excess water; exit from the ark
 - vi. NOTE:
 - (1) *Question*: How many days were Noah and his family on the ark prior to the waters? Genesis 7:7 and 10 seem to indicate that they were aboard for a week before the waters erupted, but v. 12 seems to tell us they entered the same day the deluge began.
 - (2) *Answer*: A natural harmonization is that God’s “seven days” prediction (v. 4) marks the initiation of getting all the animals on the ark, which would have required Noah and his family going on (and off) to situate all the creatures. “After seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth. . . . [And] On the on the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and

- Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark [for the last time]." Thus Noah and his family did enter the ark seven days prior to the waters, but the door wasn't shut until the seventh day, so they were free to come and go. On the seventh day they (again entered) for the last time before the waters erupted.
- b. Purpose of the flood (1 year and 11 days [371 days] based upon a 360-day year [12 lunar months x 30 days/month])
 - i. Days 1–150: global cataclysmic judgment (days 1–40 get the ark to float)
 - ii. Days 151–371 (221 additional days): cleansing and reconstruction (165 days of restoration + 56 days of drying and exit)
4. The Noahic Covenant as a Context for Redemption (8:20–22)
- a. The end of the *toledot* of Adam highlighted both the innate wickedness of mankind (Gen 6:5) and the preceding grace that overcame Noah's rebellious heart (6:8). It is this context of grace that explains how the *toledot* of Noah could open by elevating Noah as righteous, blameless, and walking with God (6:9). What made Noah different than the rest of his generation was decisively caused by divine grace.
 - Gen. 6:5, 8–9. Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . .⁸ But Noah found favor/grace in the eyes of Yahweh.⁹ These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God.
 - b. That Noah and his family were *not* any different from the rest of humanity apart from divine grace is highlighted just after the flood in 8:21 when God almost repeats verbatim the truths of 6:5. Only Noah and his family were alive, yet of them the same could be said that was proclaimed of the flood generation.
 - Gen. 8:20–22. Then Noah built an altar to Yahweh and took some of every clean animal and some over every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.²¹ And when Yahweh smelled the pleasing aroma, Yahweh said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done.²² While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."
 - c. The reason why Yahweh promises to never again curse the ground on account of man is *because* man's heart is evil (Gen 8:21). The logic is strange, implying something like: I will not curse you, because you deserve to be cursed. I suggest that the argument works only in light of redemptive history, where God's recognizes that, because of mankind's innate sinfulness, the only way his redemptive-kingdom purposes through the male deliverer of Gen 3:15 will be accomplished is if he withholds judgment until the days of the redeemer. The Noahic covenant, therefore, plays a massive role in providing a context for God's redemptive purposes to be carried out.
 - d. The Noahic covenant also highlights that physical salvation is not enough to change the human heart. What a powerful message for the rebel majority of

Israel to hear, who had just been delivered through the exodus! The only hope of internal salvation comes by grace alone in the curse-withholding God alone. How could he justly bestow such mercy? The sacrificial burnt offering likely provides an intentional pointer to the answer. Significantly, before the flood waters started, Yahweh instructed Noah to bring extra clean animals (7:2–3). That is, even in bringing the flood and in preserving Noah and his family, Yahweh knew that a sacrifice would be needed. “Then Noah built an altar to Yahweh and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar” (8:20). This burnt offering clarifies how Yahweh could justly bestow wickedness-overcoming saving grace on Noah (6:8) and, as we shall now see, how he could even bestow common grace on the world (8:21).

- e. What Yahweh promises through the Noahic covenant is often referred to as common grace: “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease” (8:22). Significantly, within the context, Yahweh’s gracious bestowment of promise is a response to a sin sacrifice: “And when Yahweh smelled the pleasing aroma, Yahweh said in his heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground because of man’” (8:21). The proper response to common grace is honor and thanksgiving (Rom 1:21). Indeed, God’s revealed purpose in giving rains fruitful seasons and in satisfying hearts with food and gladness is that they may serve as a witness to him (Acts 14:16–17) and ultimately lead people to repentance: “Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?” (Rom 2:4). God’s “forbearance” was manifest in his passing over the sins of the redeemed prior to Christ (3:25), and his “patience” was seen in his enduring tolerance of “vessels of wrath prepared for destruction” (9:22). All these are “kindnesses” being spurned by Paul’s audience, and so he writes, “But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed” (2:5). Failing to give thanks to God and to honor God is a direct affront against blood-bought grace and will stand as “exhibit A” in the final courtroom of God that the wickedness of man was indeed as it appeared. Thus Paul urges the church, “Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off” (11:22).

5. The Noahic Covenant with Creation Unpacked (9:1–17)

- Gen. 6:18–21. But I will *establish* my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female.²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive.²¹ Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them.”
- Gen. 9:9–11. Behold, I *establish* my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. I *establish*

my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.

- a. Terminology:
- i. “To cut / make a covenant” (*kārat b’rît*) = idiomatic, common Hebrew expression for making or initiating a covenant relationship (e.g., Gen. 15:18; Exod. 24:8; Deut. 5:2–3), though it may also be able to mean “renew” an existing covenant relationship but in a way that distinguishes it from what precedes (Exod. 34:10; Deut. 29:1).
 - ii. “To give / make a covenant” (*nātan b’rît*) = alternate Hebrew expression for making or initiating something new in a covenant relationship (e.g., Gen. 9:12; 17:2; Num. 25:12).
 - iii. “To maintain a covenant” (*h^aqîm b’rît*) = lit. “he upholds/erects/makes stand a covenant”; elsewhere it is used for ratifying pre-existing “oaths” (Gen. 26:3), “vows” (Num. 30:14), “words” (Deut. 9:5), “promises” (2 Sam. 7:25), and “threats” (Jer. 30:24). When used with covenants, it appears to contrast with the two above, pointing to the maintenance, fulfillment, confirmation, or establishment of a covenant already created.
 - (1) It is used of people fulfilling their covenant obligations (2 Kgs. 23:3; Jer. 34:18) and also of God fulfilling his:
 - (a) With Noah and his offspring (Gen. 6:18; 9:9, 11, 17);
 - (b) With Abraham and his offspring (Gen 17:7, 9, 21; Exod. 6:4; Lev. 26:9; Deut. 8:18*);
 - (c) With Israel throughout the generations (Lev. 26:9);
 - (d) With the restored Israel in the new covenant as fulfillment of the promises to the patriarchs (Ezek. 16:60, 62).
 - (2) Outside Genesis 6 and 9 (and possibly Exod. 6:4), the most questionable texts is Ezekiel 16:60, 62: “I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will *establish* for you and everlasting covenant.... I will *establish* my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am Yahweh.”
 - (a) Is the new covenant a totally new relationship or a fulfillment/confirmation of a previous relationship—i.e., the Abrahamic covenant (cf. 16:8 and Lev. 26:42; but see also 26:45)? If *h^aqîm b’rît* means maintain or confirm, the (new) everlasting covenant is here shown to have an organic connection, likely through fulfillment, of the Abrahamic covenant.
 - (b) Elsewhere Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, uses *kārat* for the *new* covenant (34:25; 37:26; cf. Jer. 31:31–33; 32:40). This means either that *kārat b’rît* can be used for fulfillment language or that *h^aqîm b’rît* is a broader phrase that can connote initiating a fresh covenantal relationship that did not previously exist. In light of all other uses, it seems the former is most likely.

- (3) Genesis 17 suggests that Abraham’s fatherhood of the nations stands in distinction to his covenant with Abraham and his offspring, though established by means of it (see the discussion of Genesis 17 below).
- b. Covenant *renewal* with Noah?
 - i. The covenant relationship includes not only Noah but also his offspring, which suggests maintenance or confirmation of the covenant from generation to generation.
 - ii. The covenant extends to “every living creature,” with Noah as the covenant head.
 - iii. The covenant language employs *h^aqîm b^rît*, which likely suggests that what God is doing through Noah with all creation is keeping, fulfilling, or maintaining a previous covenant established at creation through Adam.
 - iv. Noah is, therefore, a second (not the *last*) Adam, with a similar call of imaging God through the oversight of God’s world. The flood is de-creation, whereas what God does through Noah and his family afterward is recreation.

Fig. 3.9. A Comparison between the First and Second Creation Accounts

<i>Similarities</i>	<i>Differences</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation started in watery chaos (Gen. 1:2; 7:17–24) • Presence of Spirit/wind at creation (Gen. 1:2; 8:1) • Image of God and stewards of creation (Gen. 1:26–27; 7:1–3; 9:6) • Animals “after their kind” and concern for “offspring” (Gen. 1:21–22, 24, 28; 3:15; 7:2–3, 13–14) • Blessing / command for fruitfulness given (Gen. 1:28; 9:1) • Gardens as primary area of caretaking (Gen. 2:15; 9:20) • Plants connected with a fall (Gen. 2:9, 16–17; 9:20) • Sins of consumption related to nakedness (Gen. 2:25; 3:6–7; 9:21–25) • Knowledge of offense (Gen. 3:7, 22; 9:24) • Pronouncement of judgment (Gen 3:14–19; 9:25–27) • Foods designated (Gen 1:16; 9:3–4) • Original family includes father, mother, and three sons (Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Seth vs. Noah, his wife, Ham, Shem, Japheth) (Gen. 4:1–2, 25; 6:10; 7:13) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear is explicitly introduced as part of humanity’s dominion (Gen. 9:2). • Animal life is explicitly sanctioned as food (Gen. 9:3; cf. 1:29). • Dominion mandate explicitly includes the defense of the sanctity of life (Gen. 9:6). • The permanence of the new order is guaranteed by explicit covenant promises marked by the covenant sign of the rainbow (Gen. 9:12–17). • While life goes on, the decreasing longevity of life shown in the genealogy of Genesis 11 suggests that a major change has happened in the world.

Fig. 3.10. Divine Commitment and Human Obligation in the Covenant with Creation

	<i>Adamic Covenant</i>	<i>Noahic Covenant</i>
Stipulations (couched as blessings)	God’s blessing of the sea and sky creatures as, “Be fruitful” (Gen. 1:22); God’s blessing-commission of humanity to “Be fruitful ... and subdue” the earth (1:28); man/husband was to serve and guard the garden (2:15); “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall	“Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9); build the ark! (6:14; cf. v. 22); enter the ark and take animals! (7:1–2; cf. v. 5); leave the ark! (8:16–17; cf. v. 18); God’s blessing-commission of Noah and his sons to “Be fruitful...” (9:1, 7); you can eat both plant and beast, so long as you drain the

	not eat" (2:16–17); wife was to help man succeed in the kingdom building endeavor (2:18)	blood (9:3–4); require a reckoning for homicide tit for tat (9:5–6); assumed reaffirmation of calls to subdue, have dominion, serve and guard
Oath / Promises (of Blessing & Curse)	<i>Blessings:</i> Vegetation as food for humanity and other living creatures (Gen. 1:29–30; 2:9); promise of a male descendant who would destroy evil (3:15); implicit oath in God's "blessing" of sea and sky creatures (Gen. 1:22) and of humanity (1:28). <i>Curses:</i> "in the day that you of it you shall surely die" (2:17); pain in childbirth and friction in the marital relationship (2:16); the corruption of the created order, toil in work, and decay of human body (3:17–19)	"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease" (Gen. 8:22); "I establish my covenant with you and with your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you" (9:9–10); "never again shall flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood" (9:11); implicit oath in "blessing" of humanity (9:1); death highlighted both in the call to capital punishment and in its presence after the flood
Ceremonies or Oath Signs	The luminaries as "signs" (Gen. 1:14); marriage as a covenant (2:22–25); investiture of Adam and Eve (3:21)	Noah's sacrifice (Gen. 8:20–21); the rainbow as a "sign of the covenant" (9:12–17)

c. Important later biblical echoes of the Covenant with Creation:

- i. In Gen. 1:14–18, God placed lights in the heavens, "the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night" and "for signs and for seasons, and for days and years." Thus the luminaries, while governing a sphere different from that given to humanity, find their revealed purpose in relation to the earthly sphere wherein God's kingdom purposes will be manifest—their constancy in fulfilling their intended role will help keep all in the original creation working according to its intended goal. The surety of this expression of the covenant with creation is used to establish lasting confidence in God's faithfulness to the kingdom promises given to David (Jer. 33:19–26).
 - Jer. 33:19–26. The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah: ²⁰ "Thus says Yahweh: If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, ²¹ then also my covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my ministers. ²² As the host of heaven cannot be numbered and the sands of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the offspring of David my servant, and the Levitical priests who minister to me."

²³ The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah: ²⁴ "Have you not observed that these people are saying, 'Yahweh has rejected the two clans that he chose'? Thus they have despised my people so that they are no longer a nation in their sight. ²⁵ Thus says Yahweh: If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed order of heaven and earth, ²⁶ then I will reject the offspring of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them."
- ii. The pervasive perversion of all the world in violence against the creation covenant has resulted in the curse of all (Isa. 24:4–6).
 - Isa. 24:4–6. The earth mourns and withers; the world languishes and withers; the highest people of the earth languish. ⁵ The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the *everlasting covenant*. ⁶ Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men are left.

- iii. As unwavering as God's promise to creation to never again destroy the world with a flood is God's (new) covenant commitment to establish lasting peace (Isa. 54:9–10).
- Isa. 54:9–10. This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you. ¹⁰For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed.
- iv. In the days of Hosea and Isaiah, the people of Israel, “like Adam, have transgressed the covenant” (Hos. 6:7), thus securing a lasting punishment akin to Adam's (Isa. 43:26–27).
- Hos. 6:7. But like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me.
 - Isa. 43:26–27. Put me in remembrance; let us argue together; set forth your case, that you may be provided right. ²⁷*Your first father sinned, and your mediators transgressed against me.* ²⁸Therefore I will profane the princes of the sanctuary, and deliver Jacob to utter destruction and Israel to reviling.
- In light of the adverbial “there” in the second half of Hos 6:7, many emend the text read “in/at Adam,” suggesting a rebellion of Israel at the first town they reached after crossing into the Promised Land (Josh. 3:16). However, the OT never speaks of any disobedience “at Adam” and the locative adverb can be more general, referring to circumstances—e.g., “From the days of Gibeah, you have sinned, O Israel: there they have continued” (Hos 9:9). What *is* clear in the OT is the rebellion of the first man as representative human. Furthermore, in light of the echo of Exod 19:6 in God's rejection of Israel as his “priest” in Hos. 4:4–6, it seems possible that the prophet was intentionally building a link between the failed priestly roles of both Adam and Israel. In the words of John Davies: “If Hosea has a part of his shared presupposition pool with his readers the story of Genesis 2, with Adam as the idyllic priest-king (cf. Ezek. 28:12–15; Jub. 4:23–26), together with the notion that Israel at Sinai was constituted as the new humanity, the true successors of Adam (cf. 4 Ezra 3.3–36; 6.53–59; 2 Bar. 14.17–19), then it makes sense to compare the breach of the Sinai covenant (e.g., Hos 4.1, 2) with the rebellion in the garden (Gen. 3; cf. Ezek. 28:16–17)” (*Royal Priesthood*, 202–203). The fact that Isaiah, ministering at the same time, appears to be well aware of the creation covenant further supports this view.
- v. The new covenant is a new creation covenant, portrayed in terms reminiscent of the original creation covenant (Hos. 2:16–18).
- Hos. 2:16–18. And in that day, declares Yahweh, you will call me “My Husband,” and no longer will you call me “My Baal.” ¹⁷And I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more. ¹⁸And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. ¹⁹And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy.

- vi. The commitment of God to his creation is used by Christ to clarify how he is the culmination or apex of all OT hopes and types (Matt. 5:17–18).
 - Matt. 5:17–18. Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.
 - vii. The universal flood judgment in Noah’s day will be matched by a universal fire judgment at the end of the age (2 Pet. 3:5–7).
 - 2 Peter 3:5–7. For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God,⁶ and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.
6. The Curse of Canaan and the Blessing of Yahweh Through the Exaltation of Shem for the Sake of the Nations (9:18–29).
- a. Ham’s shame and the curse of Canaan:
 - i. Noah becomes drunk, and Ham “saw the nakedness of his father” (9:21–22). Three elements suggest that Canaan, not his father Ham, may have performed the original sin:
 - (1) Ham is introduced as “Ham, the father of Canaan” (9:22; cf. v. 18), an added phrase that sets the reader up for what follows.
 - (2) After he awakes, Noah knows what his *youngest son* had done. Every time Noah’s three sons are mentioned, Ham is always listed second (5:32; 6:10; 7:13; 9:18; 10:1). This includes the ordering of the genealogies in the Table of Nations, which are listed in reverse order (ch. 10). What this means is that Ham was *not* Noah’s youngest immediate son.
 - (3) Upon his awareness of the sin that his *youngest son* did against him, Noah cursed *Canaan* (9:25), which likely means that the youngest male member of Noah’s household was his *grandson* Canaan, son of Ham, who intentionally sinned in relation to his grandfather’s nakedness.
 - (4) The positing of “Ham, the father of Canaan” seeing Noah’s nakedness (9:22) would then be a declaration of guilt through headship.
 - ii. The nature of the curse against Canaan is that he will serve his brothers. This could mean that he will serve Cush, Egypt, and Put (10:6); however, if they are listed in birth order, as seems likely, his other immediate brothers would not yet be born. As such, the “brothers” to which Noah most likely refers are Shem and Japheth, his uncles, brothers of Ham.
 - iii. A further element is that mention of Canaan’s sin and curse anticipates the later sin and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (ch. 19), which are associated with Canaan (10:19).

- b. Blessing Yahweh and Shem's exaltation for the sake of the nations.
- i. Directly following Noah's "cursed be Canaan" is a new speech that opens, "Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Shem" (9:26). The Lord is directly associated with Shem in a way distinct from his brothers. We then hear, "Let Canaan be his servant." This fulfills the curse stated in 9:25 with the first of the two brothers.
 - ii. 9:27 includes a question of pronominal referent that alters the meaning of the verse significantly depending on one's interpretation. We read, "May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant." Walter Kaiser reads the 3ms "him" as a reference to *God*, and he offers the following five arguments (*The Messiah in the Old Testament*, 44–45):
 - (1) Hebrew presumes the subject of one clause will carry over to the next if no new explicit subject is present.
 - (2) Kaiser sees 7 lines of Hebrew poetry in 9:25–27, with v. 25 addressing only Cain, v. 26 addressing Cain and Shem, and v. 27 addressing Cain, Shem, and Japheth. Reading "him" in v. 27 as referring to Japheth would break the expanding structure.
 - (3) Shem is clearly being distinguished from his brothers in v. 26 and the greater context, but including Japheth as the referent to "him" in v. 27 would make Shem subordinate to Japheth, which doesn't fit the context.
 - (4) Since Yahweh clearly links himself with v. 26, it makes sense that he would say that he will make his abode on earth among the Semites in v. 27.
 - (5) The most natural reading of Japheth dwelling in the tents of Shem is that Japheth would in some way conquer his brother. However, this would humiliate Shem, leaving him no better off than Canaan.
 - iii. Kaiser's argument is appealing and is supported by many early Jewish interpreters (e.g., *Jub.* 7:12, 19; also *Gen. Rab.* 36.8 and *Tgs. Onq., Neof.*). However, the following observations suggest the 3ms "him" of v. 27 does indeed refer to Japheth dwelling in the tents of Shem.
 - (1) Kaiser's assertion that the subject of a previous clause remains the subject of the next where no explicit subject is used is *not* always true, specifically when a direct object or object of a preposition ends the previous clause. Kaiser himself recognizes this in his reading of Gen 15:6, where he reads, "And he [Abram] believed in Yahweh, and he [Yahweh] credited it to him righteousness." In his reading of Gen 15:6 Kaiser's does *not* follow his own argument for reading 9:27.
 - (2) While I like the implications of Kaiser's approach, I think the truth of his claims hold *within Genesis* even if 9:27 does not support it. Shem's priority is stressed in the fact that his *toledot* (11:10–26) introduces the patriarchal cycles that dominate the book. Furthermore, within this unit God promises "I will be

with you” (e.g., 26:3; 28:15; 31:3; cf. 39:2, 21). That is, 9:26 distinctively identifies Yahweh with Shem, and then the rest of Genesis sets the offspring of Shem apart as those who will enjoy God’s presence and serve as agents of his blessing. Kaiser’s reading of 9:27 is not needed to make this point.

- (3) 9:25 says Canaan will serve *his brothers* (pl). 9:26 highlights his service *to Shem*, and we then expect 9:27 to highlight his service *to Japheth*, a reading that is only possible if the “him” of 9:27 refers to Japheth and not Yahweh.
 - (4) We must ask, What does it mean that Japheth would “dwell in the tents of Shem.” Kaiser suggests it means that Japheth would somehow conquer his brothers. Many other scholars, however, see this as an emphasis that, while Canaan will serve both brothers, both Canaan and Japheth will in some way serve Shem. Japheth’s dwelling in his brother’s tents points not to Japheth’s domination but to his incorporation, with Shem serving as the central agent of global blessing and the reversal of the curse. 9:27 anticipates the ingrafting of the Gentiles into the single people of God.
 - (5) Finally, Genesis is much more focused on the blessing of God to the nations than God’s presence in their midst. Exodus picks up the latter theme fully, but not Genesis. In this light, and in light of the arguments above, I think the evidence favors reading 9:27 as addressing Japheth’s dwelling in Shem’s tents. The verse then serves as one more text elevating Shem (and ultimately Abraham/Israel) as the channel through whom God will shape a global people for himself.
7. The Aftermath of the Flood: Fall and Dispersion (10:1–11:9)
- a. “70” nations/families that need God’s blessing (segmented genealogy in Genesis 10)—focus is in detailing Israel’s mission field.
 - b. The narrative affirms God’s assertion that mankind’s sinful nature before the flood (6:4) was not altered through the flood (8:21). Humanity is driven toward self-rule and self-exaltation as opposed to God-rule and God-exaltation (11:4).
 - Gen. 11:4. Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and *let us make a name for ourselves*, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.
 - c. The Punishment and Anticipated Blessing: The Tower of Babel
 - i. God desires a unified community of kingdom families, but unity is dangerous where there is a state of rebellion.
 - ii. Foreign languages are usually a sign of judgment in Scripture:
 - (1) God promises that Israel will hear foreign tongues as a signal of divine judgment if/when they turn from him (Deut. 28:49).
 - (2) Because Israel has rejected the clear message of God’s prophet, he will now “speak” to them in the language of Assyria—that is, bring on them Assyrian captivity (Isa. 28:11–13).
 - (3) Jeremiah makes a similar prophecy about Babylon (Jer. 5:15).

- (4) Speaking of the wicked, the psalmist pleads that God would “divide their tongues,” disarming the unity of hostility and bringing judgment (Ps 55:9).
 - (5) The psalmist also speaks of the Egyptian bondage as a place where “a people of strange language” were in control (Ps 114:1).
 - (6) Paul’s censure of the gift of tongues without interpretation in 1 Cor. 14:20–25 appears to grow from his conviction that the gathered community is to be a place where outsiders hear the terms of peace and message of hope rather than the sound of judgment. Note how he quotes from Isa. 28:11–13 (with an echo of Deut 28:49).
- iii. Zephaniah anticipated a day when Babel would be reversed in the sense that a unified remnant from all the peoples of the world would be preserved through judgment who would together call on the name of Yahweh (Zeph 3:9–10).
 - Zeph 3:9–10. For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of Yahweh and serve him with one accord. ¹⁰ From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshippers, the daughter of my dispersed ones, shall bring my offering.
 - iv. The cross of Christ is the focus point of God’s ultimate judgment, and by it restoration blessings are made possible on a worldwide scope, the fulfillment of Zephaniah’s prophecy. Humanity begins to be reunified in Christ, and the first signal of such unity is the overcoming of the language barrier at Pentecost (Acts 2:1–8). What is clear is that regardless of what was spoken, a unified message of the good news of the reign of God in Christ was heard and understood by all Jews present. The ultimate result was the reestablishment of unity among the true humanity of God (i.e., the reversal of Babel) (Acts 2:42–47), but not a unity around a single language. Instead, the gospel worked in the context of the ever-present reminder of the curse.
 - v. In this day, the end times or “last hour” has been inaugurated (1 John 2:19) and with it localized manifestations of the anti-Christ’s work, whether through false teaching or persecution. The day will come, however, where the tribulation will become great and global (Matt 24:21; Rev 2:22; 7:14), when Babel(on) will rise again and the God-hostility will be almost universal, only to be destroyed by the return of the Lamb King (Rev 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). Those identified with Babylon bear the mark of the beast’s name (Rev 13:16–17; 14:11), but the small remnant of those faithful to God bear the name of the Lamb and of the Father on their foreheads (14:1; cf. 3:12; 22:4).
 - vi. As a fulfillment of Gen. 12:3 (“and in you [Abram] all the families of the earth shall be blessed”), Rev. 7:9–10 points to the completion of God’s unified community—men and women from “every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb” declaring in unified voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” Significantly, the overthrow of Babel(on) does not include the return to a single

language. Rather than a unified language there will be a unified song of praise to the Lamb, but the use of multiple languages will provide an ever-present reminder of past sin and amazing mercy.